Yankee 'Blackbirding':
The United States and the Illegal Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1850-1867

by
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A dissertation submitted to Johns Hopkins University in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Baltimore, Maryland
July 2017

Abstract

This dissertation examines the United States' changing relationship with the transatlantic slave trade during the traffic's final, illegal, phase from 1850 to 1867. During this period, the trade ran primarily along a new slaving network connecting the US, West Central Africa, and Cuba, and ensnared more than a quarter of a million captives. Viewing New York and other US ports in national and international perspectives, this dissertation explores how and why the US participated in the illegal slave trade after 1850, but dropped out of the traffic in the 1860s. It also probes the global repercussions of these developments.

The dissertation argues that US participation in the trade was made possible not only by the actions of slave traders themselves, who proved adept at evading suppression both in the US and abroad, but by many Americans' desire to incorporate Spanish Cuba into the US, and by the growing power of the US in global affairs. Americans' pursuit of Cuba, I contend, ultimately worked against suppression in the US by lumping blame for the traffic onto Spain. Meanwhile, the US' increasing commercial and geopolitical strength provided traffickers with tools necessary for sustaining the trade and helped Washington repel international criticism of its lax approach to suppression. When the antislavery Republican Party took power in the early 1860s, however, the new President, Abraham Lincoln, quickly set about dismantling American participation in the trade. The powerful influence of the US now worked against the traffic, which slowly petered out during the mid-1860s.

Advisor: Philip D. Morgan.

Readers: Stephanie Gamble, Jane I. Guyer, Michael P. Johnson, Gabriel Paquette.

Acknowledgements

I want to begin by thanking my mentors, colleagues, and friends at Johns Hopkins. Philip Morgan has been a terrific advisor; always encouraging me to see the bigger picture and offering incisive, but constructive criticism. Whatever has rubbed off, I am better for it. Thanks also to Michael Johnson, Toby Ditz, François Furstenberg, Gabriel Paquette, and Pier Larson, who have played important roles in my training over the past six years. The Atlantic Seminar at Hopkins has been a wonderful place to share my work, draw sharp critiques, and learn from the diverse and fascinating work of others. Thanks to each of the Seminar's participants, including Rachel Calvin Whitehead, Stephanie Gamble, Claire Gherini, Sara Damiano, Will Brown, Joe Clark, Lauren MacDonald, Nicholas Radburn, Katherine Smoak, Christopher Consolino, Nathan Marvin, Meredith Gaffield, Dexnell Peters, Alexey Krichtal, Jennie Williams, and Oriol Regué Sendrós. Special thanks are also due to Tobie Meyer-Fong, the director of graduate studies in the History Department, as well as Megan Zeller and Rachel LaBozetta, who have all provided critical support at important junctures. I also want to mention Catherine Clinton, my advisor at Queen's University Belfast, who encouraged my studies at the Master's level and suggested that I apply to Johns Hopkins' doctoral program. Catherine remains a source of guidance and inspiration.

The research and writing phases of this dissertation were made possible by many individuals and institutions. Having arrived at Hopkins as an archivist, I want to make special mention of the staff at the many libraries and archives that I visited for research. I am especially indebted to the staff at the national archives of the US, Britain, Cuba, and Spain. Closer to home, the librarians at Hopkins, especially Chella Vaidyanathan and more recently, Stephanie Gamble, have always been willing to offer a helping hand. I also want to thank several organizations for funding my work, in particular, the National Maritime Museum in London, the Program in Latin

American Studies at Hopkins, and the Doris G. Quinn Foundation. The Gilder Lehrman Center at Yale, Queen's University Belfast, and The University of Havana, among other institutions, have been important venues both for presenting my work and receiving feedback from specialists in the field. I would especially like to thank Roquinaldo Ferreira, David Eltis, and Leonardo Marques for engaging with my work and pushing me to think harder about it.

I would not have undertaken or completed this project without the support of my fantastic family. My parents, Ray and Ernest, have always encouraged me to pursue my love of history. They continue to show me the real value of things, even from across the pond. My son, Dylan, has been another source of inspiration. He joined our family as I began writing up my research and has been a glorious distraction ever since. My education at Hopkins had been a treat, but Dylan has been Baltimore's greatest gift. Most of all, I thank my wonderful wife, Megan. She has supported me in this project in more ways than I can explain. Thank you, Megan, for everything. I dedicate this dissertation to you.

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Introduction

On July 5, 1852, the prominent American abolitionist, Frederick Douglass, addressed an antislavery gathering in Rochester, New York. In what would become his most famous speech, Douglass, who had been born into slavery in Maryland, focused on the question of what the fourth of July meant to American slaves. To the slave, Douglass argued, Independence Day was not an occasion for celebration, but a "day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim." Although the US had enshrined liberty and equality into its founding documents, Douglass explained, its laws and large swathes of its population betrayed these principles by protecting and sustaining slavery in the South. He was particularly critical of the domestic or "internal" slave trade that had now been operating in great scale between the Upper South and Lower South for at least a generation. Douglass noted that he had been exposed to this brutal, family-splitting traffic in Baltimore during the 1830s, when he had watched "slave ships in the Basin, anchored from the shore, with their cargoes of human flesh, waiting for favorable winds to waft them down the Chesapeake." With this picture in mind, he concluded that "shouts of liberty and equality" on the fourth of July, represented "hollow mockery" to the slave.[1]

To bolster his charge of hypocrisy, Douglass argued that Americans' support for slavery clashed with the uncompromising approach they, and their laws, took towards the transatlantic slave trade. Although "the men engaged in the slave-trade between the states pass without condemnation, and their business is deemed honorable," he contended, "much execration is poured out by Americans upon those engaged in the foreign slave-trade." Referring to the federal Act of

[1] Philip S. Foner ed., *Frederick Douglass: Selected Speeches and Writings* (Chicago, IL: Lawrence Hill, 1999), 188-206.

1820, which superseded and strengthened the slave trade Abolition Act of 1808, Douglass pointed out that US participation in the transatlantic trade "has long since been denounced by this government, as piracy." Indeed, as he correctly noted, the US sent a portion of its Navy to the African coast to patrol for slave ships. "Everywhere, in this country," he argued, "it is safe to speak of this foreign slave-trade, as a most inhuman traffic, opposed alike to the laws of God and of man."[2]

Although Douglass simplified American attitudes towards slavery and the slave trade, his argument about US opposition to the transatlantic traffic appeared to hold considerable merit in 1852. Douglass was correct to say that federal law prohibited US participation in the international slave trade and that these statutes seemed to have serious teeth. The US had actually been the first nation to declare the slave trade piracy – a crime punishable by death. By midcentury, only a few nations had followed their lead.[3] In addition, although Douglass elided the fact that US involvement in the transatlantic traffic had continued in various forms long after the 1808 and 1820 laws, much of this activity had recently ended with the closure of the slave trade to Brazil in 1850.[4] In fact, by 1852, US participation in the slave trade was probably at its lowest level since the piracy act. Meanwhile, many prominent Americans, including the editors of leading newspapers and senior policymakers, were excoriating Spain for allowing the trade to continue to its colony, Cuba, which was now the final open market for African slaves in the Americas.[5] In

[2] Ibid.
[3] On this legislation, see Paul Finkelman, "Regulating the African Slave Trade." *Civil War History* 54, no. 4 (2008): 379–405; Leonardo Marques, *The US and the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the Americas, 1776-1867* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), 91-101; W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the US of America, 1638-1870* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1896), 118-130; Craig Hollander, "Against a Sea of Troubles: Slave Trade Suppressionism During the Early Republic" (Ph.D Dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 2013), 90-136; Don Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic: An Account of the US Government's Relations to Slavery* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 150-2.
[4] See, especially, Marques, *The US*, 106-84.
[5] See chapter 1 and especially chapter 5.

1852, therefore, federal law was set against the trade, illegal US participation in the traffic had ebbed, and many Americans were calling for Spain to suppress the trade completely.

Yet Douglass's argument about the US's robust approach to the slave trade was about to be put to the test. Although he presented Southern slavery as the final target for American antislavery activists, another challenge was reemerging. In the same year as he gave his address in upstate Rochester, downstate, traffickers from all over the Atlantic basin were converging on the thriving metropolis of New York City with the aim of making the US a major player in the transatlantic slave trade once again. Their arrival would herald a new phase of American engagement with slavery and a new challenge for abolitionists both in the US and abroad.[6]

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Douglass's Rochester speech came in the middle of a century dominated by conflict over the transatlantic slave trade and slavery not just in the US, but in many parts of the Atlantic world. In contrast to previous centuries, when opposition to human bondage had been mainly limited to the actions of enslaved peoples, the slave trade and slavery now came under sustained assault from a much larger cast of reformers and revolutionaries. These assailants delivered several early blows during, and soon after, the 'Age of Revolutions,' which swept many parts of the Atlantic basin during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In the Americas, these conflicts brought forth colonial rebellions, armed slaves, and in some cases, put emerging talk of liberty and equality into action. In the French colony of Saint Domingue, for example, slaves and free blacks opened the century with an extraordinary uprising that ousted the French, severed the slave trade, and even destroyed slavery itself. Shortly after the Haitian Revolution, Denmark, Britain, and the US banned

[6] For the arrival of these traffickers in US ports, see chapter 1.

their slave trades, although they kept slavery in place. International opposition to the trade was growing, however, and through various means, every major slave trading nation outlawed the traffic by 1836. Meanwhile, Britain launched a major naval campaign to extinguish the trade on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. British vessels were joined by cruisers from several other nations, including the US. In 1833, Britain went a step further by abolishing slavery throughout its empire, including in its Caribbean colonies, which had depended on human bondage for centuries.[7]

Despite this onslaught, slavery, and even the slave trade, remained remarkably robust during much of the nineteenth century. Crucially, the ideological arguments and economic incentives that underpinned them remained in place in many parts of the Atlantic world. Indeed, in much of the Americas they became stronger. In the US, Cuba, and Brazil, where large tracts of fertile land remained uncultivated, planters sought more slaves to expand their agricultural operations. Meanwhile, despite having made commitments to abolish the trade, metropolitan elites in Europe and local officials in Africa and the Americas, many of whom were deeply connected to slave interests, ignored or even abetted the slave trade for decades. More broadly, demand for slave-produced commodities such as sugar, coffee, and cotton from the US and Europe increased slave prices in the Americas and created healthy profit rates for traffickers willing to defy abolition laws. These developments reverberated on the African coast, where societies that had long been tied to the traffic and found limited demand for alternative exports continued to supply captives for incoming slave ships. Overall, slave traders in Africa forced almost four million captives aboard slavers from the beginning of the century to the final closure of the traffic in the 1860s.[8] Although slavery collapsed in the US during the same decade, it survived in Brazil and Cuba until the 1880s. The nineteenth century, therefore, had witnessed the extinction of both the Atlantic

[7] For more on these developments in the first half of the nineteenth century, see chapter 1.
[8] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/mcqgSotc

slave trade and slavery in the Americas, but their demise had been halting and marked by intense struggle.[9]

A small, but growing number of historians have explored the ways the US engaged with the transatlantic slave trade during this turbulent century. The first major work was W.E.B. Du Bois's *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States.* Published in 1896, this pioneering book tracked US participation in the trade over its entire history, but included a lengthy consideration of the traffic after federal abolition in 1808.[10] Another important study, Warren Howard's *American Slavers and the Federal Law*, appeared during the 1960s, a decade that witnessed the US Civil Rights movement and renewed scholarly interest in American slavery in general. Howard's book was the first major work to focus entirely on US involvement in the illegal slave trade.[11] After a generation of little attention, the early twenty-first century has seen a flurry of new scholarship on the US traffic. Activated perhaps by the bicentennial of the US abolition of the slave trade in 2008, these historians, including Sylviane Diouf, Gerald Horne, Ernest Obedele-Starks, Leonardo Marques, and Sharla Fett, have explored the ways in which the traffic continued well after abolition.[12]

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[9] The strength and dynamism of Atlantic slavery during the nineteenth century is captured in recent literature on the "second slavery." The foundational work is Dale W. Tomich, *Through the Prism of Slavery: Labor, Capital, and World Economy* (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003). See also, Rafael Marquese, Tâmis Parron, and Márcia Berbel, Marques, Leonardo trans. *Slavery and Politics: Brazil and Cuba, 1790-1850* (Alberquerque, N.M.: University of New Mexico Press, 2016). For overview of pro and antislavery clash in the Atlantic world, particularly in the nineteenth century, see Seymour Drescher, *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Robin Blackburn, *The American Crucible: Slavery, Emancipation and Human Rights* (London & New York: Verso, 2011); David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Emancipation* (New York, NY: Knopf, 2014).

[10] Du Bois, *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade*. For another account of the trade produced around the same time, see also John Randolph Spears, *The American Slave-Trade: An Account of its Origin, Growth and Suppression* (New York, NY: Scribner's Sons, 1900).

[11] Warren S. Howard, *American Slavers and the Federal Law, 1837-1862* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1963). Other works from this period include, Tom Henderson Wells, *The Slave Ship Wanderer* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1967); Ronald Takaki, *A Pro-Slavery Crusade; the Agitation to Reopen the African Slave Trade* (New York, N.Y.: Free Press, 1971). Spears's *The American Slave-Trade*, was republished in 1967.

[12] These works include, Erik Calonius, *The Wanderer: The Last American Slave Ship and the Conspiracy That Set Its Sails* (New York, N.Y.: St Martin's Press, 2006); Ron Soodalter, *Hanging Captain Gordon: The Life and Trial of an American Slave Trader* (New York: Atria, 2006); Sylviane Diouf, *Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The Story of the*

These studies have addressed three main issues. The first is the question of what the US role in the illegal slave trade actually entailed. This matter is complicated by the shadowy nature of the traffic and the incomplete state of records, not to mention the complex international dimensions of the trade itself. Assessments have become remarkably more refined over time, however, as historians broadened their research to include overseas archives and took advantage of new research tools. The launch of the updated *Transatlantic Slave Trade Database* (hereafter *Voyages*) in 2008, a website that stores research data on legal and illegal slaving voyages, has been particularly helpful to historians attempting to stitch together the various forms of US involvement in the traffic.[13] Marques, for instance, drew strongly on this dataset in his 2016 book, *The US and the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the Americas, 1776-1867*. Focusing primarily on how slave traders responded to growing international opposition to the trade, Marques's work offers a new degree of specificity about US involvement in the traffic over the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, especially with regard to the continued use of the US vessels and the American flag.

A second focus had been the effect of US politics and geopolitics on American enforcement of its anti-slave trade laws. Du Bois addressed this issue directly, arguing that the South's

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Clotilda and the Last Enslaved African Brought to America (New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2007); Ernest Obadele-Starks, *Freebooters and Smugglers: The Foreign Slave Trade in the US After 1808* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 2007); Gerald Horne, *The Deepest South: The US, Brazil, and the African Slave Trade* (New York: New York University Press, 2007); David Eltis, "The US Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1644-1867: An Assessment," *Civil War History* 54, no. 4 (2008): 347-78; Karen Fisher Younger, "Liberia and the Last Slave Ships" *Civil War History*, 54, 4 (Dec. 2008): 424-442; David Head, "Slave Smuggling by Foreign Privateers: The Illegal Slave Trade and the Geopolitics of the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic*, 33, 3 (2013): 433-462; Peter Andreas, *Smuggler Nation: How Illicit Trade Made America* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 130-153; Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery, Capitalism, and Imperialism in the Mississippi Valley* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 395-422; Craig Hollander, "Against a Sea of Troubles: Slave Trade Suppressionism During the Early Republic" (Ph.D Dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 2013); Ted Maris-Wolf, "'Of Blood and Treasure': Recaptive Africans the Politics of Slave Trade Suppression," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 4 (2014): 53-83; Jonathan M. Bryant, *Dark Places of the Earth: The Voyage of the Slave Ship Antelope* (New York, N.Y.: W.W. Norton, 2015); Stephen M. Chambers, *No God But Gain: The Untold Story of Cuban Slavery, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Making of the US* (New York, N.Y.: Verso, 2015); Marques, *The US*; Sharla Fett, *Recaptured Africans: Surviving Slave Ships, Detention, and Dislocation in the Final Years of the Slave Trade* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2017); Randy J. Sparks, "Blind Justice: The US's Failure to Curb the Illegal Slave Trade" *Law and History Review*, 35, 1 (Feb. 2017): 53-79.

[13] 'Voyages'. Accessible at http://slavevoyages.org.

commitment to slavery, including illicit importations of African slaves, helped protect the traffic from serious US suppression efforts at home and even at sea.[14] More recently, however, historians have pointed out that the South was not a major importer of slaves, especially after 1820, and have offered alternative characterizations of the US relationship with the traffic. In his 2001 book, *The Slaveholding Republic*, Don Fehrenbacher concludes that US suppression succeeded in some ways, but failed in others. The shortcomings, he contends, were largely because suppression was of marginal importance to US policymakers and because successive administrations were unwilling to permit the British Navy to search American vessels for slaves.[15] Marques has also emphasized how American attachments to sovereignty and suspicion of British motives forestalled suppression, although he also notes that US commitment to free trade aided the slave traffic in many ways, especially through the provision of ships for the trade from Africa to Brazil and Cuba.[16] Each of these historians, and others, have further noted that the politics of the slave trade became strongly tied to the question of slavery in the US during the 1850s, particularly when a handful of southerners proposed overthrowing federal law and reopening the slave trade to the South. Battles over the 'reopening' movement are widely perceived to have contributed to the sectional tensions that resulted in the outbreak of Civil War in 1861.[17]

A final concern has been the experiences of enslaved people who were subjected to US participation in the trade and its suppression. Although the paucity of sources left by traffickers and slaves makes this focus particularly challenging, a few historians have drawn valuable information from a few richly documented voyages. Marcus Rediker and Sylviane Diouf, for example, have examined African experiences aboard the slave ships *Amistad* (1838) and *Clotilda*

[14] Du Bois, *The Suppression of the Slave Trade*, 168-87.
[15] Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic*, 204.
[16] Marques, *The US*.
[17] On the reopening movement, see Takaki, *A Pro-Slavery Crusade*, and chapter 5 of this dissertation.

(1861), two vessels that brought captives to the US (although the former was neither a transatlantic voyage nor destined for US shores).[18] Sharla Fett has also examined the experiences of several hundred "recaptives" who were freed from illegal slaving voyages by the US Navy during the mid-nineteenth century. These Africans spent short periods under federal jurisdiction in the US before Congress sent them back across the Atlantic Ocean to Liberia.[19]

This dissertation contributes to the growing scholarship on the slave trade by charting the rise and fall of US participation in the traffic between 1850 and 1867. I have chosen this periodization for three reasons. First, the midcentury trade was a discrete era of the traffic. Not only was it bounded by the closure of the massive illegal slave trade to Brazil in 1850 and the complete suppression of the traffic in 1867, it was during this period that the slave trade once again returned to US soil, having been largely absent for a generation. As the traffic reappeared in US ports, they became key nodes in a powerful new slaving network that stretched to many parts of coastal Africa and to Cuba. This new axis was the final triangle in the infamous, although crudely described, 'triangular trade.' A second reason is that the traffic was still substantial in scale, despite being smaller than previous eras. In total, around 272,000 captives boarded slave ships in Africa between 1850 and 1867.[20] This concluding era of the slave trade, therefore, witnessed an intensity of interaction that makes close examination worthwhile. Finally, this period of the traffic has not been extensively examined by historians. Although aspects of the midcentury trade have been addressed in larger synthetic works by Marques and others, and in Diouf and Fett's analyses of

[18] Marcus Rediker, *The Amistad Rebellion: An Atlantic Odyssey of Slavery and Freedom* (New York: Viking, 2012); Diouf, *Dreams of Africa in Alabama*. The *Amistad* was not a transatlantic slave ship, but a slave ship that carried Africans who had recently been transported across the Atlantic Ocean.
[19] Fett, *Recaptive Africans*.
[20] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/Z9QItbNn

Africans arriving in the US, the last phase of the trade as a whole has not received book-length analysis.

The relatively short periodization of this dissertation permits a capacious study of the traffic. The following work is intended to be a local, national, and yet highly international study of US involvement in the illegal slave trade. It will focus particularly on New York, the hub of the US traffic during the 1850s and 1860s, but will pay attention to other US ports, as well as to the national political, social, and economic factors that influenced the course of the trade. This dissertation also analyzes the ways in which US participation in the traffic was always modified by broader international commercial networks and geopolitical developments. In many ways, the dissertation looks out from New York City to the broader Atlantic world, to which it was intimately connected. It recognizes that slave traders spun networks from Lower Manhattan to parts of the African coast and to Cuba, and also that other states, especially the British, directed antislavery attention inward towards US ports. The dissertation views these slave trading havens as global hubs for slave traffickers and their opponents, and therefore as intense zones of interaction over the trade.

The dissertation's major argument is that US role in the midcentury traffic was largely determined by the shifting politics of slavery at home and by rising US economic and diplomatic power in global affairs. During the 1850s, I contend, successive pro-slavery Democratic administrations failed to prioritize suppression. Although these administrations (and the vast majority of the American public), did not support the slave trade, their preoccupation with expanding American slavery into new zones, especially by incorporating Cuba into the US, led them to neglect suppression at home and overseas. Crucially, one of their key arguments for wresting the island from Spain was that the Iberian power had surrendered the legitimacy of its

rule by permitting the slave trade to continue to the island. In this way, leading US policymakers considered Spain solely responsible for the trade, thereby eliding growing US participation in the traffic and muting their attempts to suppress the trade. In other words, although Du Bois was correct to contend that successive US administrations neglected suppression, the main reason for their neglect, at least by midcentury, was overweening interest in Cuba, rather than an affinity with the slave trade itself.

At the same time, not all Americans viewed Spain as solely culpable for the traffic. Opponents of slavery in the US, including the newly founded Republican Party, saw growing US participation in the trade as a further evidence that the slave interests had taken over the federal government. Having already witnessed extraordinary victories for slavery during the 1840s and 1850s, including the annexation of Texas by the US, they viewed the growing slave trade, especially in Northern cities such as New York, as a new sign that slavery was expanding inexorably throughout the republic. It was only after the election of a Republican President, Abraham Lincoln, and in the midst of the Civil War, that the US government would finally take robust action against American participation in the traffic, and subsequently, slavery itself.

If slavery politics played an important role in determining the course of the slave trade during the 1850s and early 1860s, rising American power in global affairs was also key. The growing commercial strength of the US was critical. New York, in particular, had become the largest port in the Americas, a massive financial and trading hub that spun webs across the globe and into slave trading zones in Cuba and in Africa. These assets would shape the ways the US would participate in the traffic, especially with regard to providing ships for the trade and financial services to slave trade investors. The growing geopolitical strength of the US also had important implications for the traffic. The US, which by midcentury had established itself as the leading

power in the hemisphere and a growing global force, was robust in defending itself against criticism from international pressure concerning the trade. The US, for example, was the only major nation strong enough to reject British demands to search its merchant vessels for slaves by 1850, which proved a huge boon to traffickers. Certainly, other powers were directly involved in the trade, especially Spain (both directly and via Cuba) and several West Central Africa polities, but they withstood growing international pressure not primarily on the basis of their own strength, but because they were protected by complicated geopolitical situations that precluded direct intervention by the British. Indeed, it was largely because of US strength that its departure from the traffic had serious repercussions on the broader trade. The collapse of US participation in the traffic during the Civil War, along with the decline of slavery in the US, the largest slave population in the Americas, heralded the end of the trade for good.

Although the internal politics of slavery and rising US power in global affairs largely determined the contours of American participation in the trade, this dissertation also contends that the traffic as a whole was shaped by broader global changes during the mid-nineteenth century. This was an era of global integration thanks to breakthroughs in transportation technologies, the spread of global capital, and mass international migrations. These changes were directly manifest in the slave trade as traffickers used larger and faster vessels, including steam ships, to quicken voyages and lower transportation costs. At the same time, growing demand for slave-produced staples from industrialized nations made the trade more profitable than ever and encouraged traffickers to force record numbers of captives aboard their vessels (in a few cases, over one thousand). In addition to harnessing new technologies, slave trade investors developed new international investment strategies along joint stock company lines and used growing (legal) commercial ties between slaving zones to circuit their capital to distant speculators. Meanwhile,

although the slave trade wasnow confined to only a few regions, the traffic as a whole became more internationalized as slave traders joined the masses of migrants moving around the Atlantic world during midcentury, finding niches in the traffic and escaping regions where they were no longer welcome. The final phase of the slave trade, in other words, was marked by the imprint of wider global developments concerning industry, capital, and global mobility.[21]

These arguments are developed over five chapters. I began by examining the global origins of US participation in the midcentury trade. The US continued to be tied to the traffic during the first half of the nineteenth century despite national and international abolition laws. Although few captives arrived on US shores, especially after 1820, Americans were still involved in other branches of the trade, particularly to Brazil and Cuba. A major international assault on the illegal slave trade during the mid-nineteenth century, however, dramatically curtailed the traffic on both sides of the Atlantic basin and restricted US participation in the trade. In response to this pressure, slave traders, especially from the Southern Atlantic, migrated to the US in the early 1850s, forged networks with local allies, and began developing a new slaving axis running between US ports, parts of Africa, and Cuba.

Chapter 2 describes the key US roles in the slave trade between 1850 and 1863. Drawing on precedents set by US and foreign slave traders in Rio de Janeiro and elsewhere during the 1840s, traffickers in American ports, especially New York, harnessed the power of US shipping for the trade after 1850. They made particular use of American-built vessels and the US flag. Slave trade investors in New York and elsewhere also began financing voyages in new combinations. Drawing on ties with Africa and Cuba, speculators based in the US clubbed together with distant associates

[21] On these broader changes during the nineteenth century, see C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004); Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the Modern World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Patrick Camiller (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014); Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital* (New York: Vintage Books edition, 1996).

to jointly finance voyages. Although not every vessel arrived safely in Cuba, this approach enabled investors to overcome many of the risks posed by increasing international suppression. New York also became an import hub for laundering their capital during this period. Local merchants, many with no other connection with the slave trade, acted as intermediaries for traffickers, turning 'dirty' money into clean, and transmitting it to investors across the Atlantic basin.

The third chapter examines midcentury slaving voyages. Pre-voyage preparation began in US ports, where traffickers procured vessels and crews, and sought to evade detection by US authorities. Meanwhile, in Africa, especially in West Central Africa, where the vast majority of slaves embarked slavers during this period, Atlantic slave traders bought captives for incoming ships. These slaves were younger and lived nearer to the coast than captives during previous eras of the trade. They also endured a brutal the middle-passage. Although voyages were generally faster than before, captives experienced greater than normal physical confinement and unfamiliar diets. Mortality rates fluctuated wildly. Cuba was the only substantial market for African slaves during this period, but the destinations and fates of middle passage survivors varied considerably. Most faced slavery in Cuba, but others were dispersed to myriad destinations around the Atlantic basin after capture by antislavery cruisers. To determine these contours of the midcentury trade, I focus throughout on a particularly rich case study, the voyage of the *Julia Moulton*, as well as information from other examples and the *Voyages* database.

Chapter 4 examines the British government's attempt to overcome weak American suppression efforts by hiring a spy, Emilio Sanchez, to report on the traffic in New York City between 1859 and 1862. Facing continued slaving in the US and elsewhere, Britain developed a growing network of spies across the Atlantic world from the late 1840s to the early 1860s. Spies such as the Cuban-born Sanchez labored for the British government for a number of reasons,

including revenge against traffickers, financial gain, and ideological opposition to the trade. Sanchez conducted impressive undercover work on the docks of Lower Manhattan and gleaned rich information from a variety of sources both in the US and from his native Cuba. Indicating the growing international reach of the British government and increasing global integration, Britain transmitted Sanchez's intelligence from New York via London to the British fleet suppressing the slave trade off the African coast. This process led to a substantial number of captures by the British, but also underlined that the end of the slave trade could only come with the full support of states in which the slave trade was still active.

The final chapter closely examines the politics of the illegal slave trade in the US. Although federal anti-slave trade laws seemed to be robust, they contained many loopholes. Moreover, full suppression of the traffic depended on energetic action emanating from Washington. The ruling Democratic Party's prioritization of slavery expansion, and especially the incorporation of Cuba into the US, however, worked against serious federal suppression efforts for much of the 1850s. On the other hand, the emergent antislavery Republican Party viewed US participation in the slave trade and radical southerners' calls for reopening the slave trade to the South as a disturbing plot to nationalize slavery. Rising antislavery opposition to the slave trade eventually overwhelmed US participation in the slave trade during the early years of the Civil War, driving slave traders out of US ports, and ultimately crippling the traffic as a whole.

Chapter 1

The International Origins of The Midcentury Slave Trade

In the spring of 1854, Joseph Crawford, the British consul in Havana, wrote via London to John Crampton, the British Minister in Washington D.C., informing him that a slave trader, Joaquim Gaspar da Motta, was on his way from Cuba to the US. According to Crawford, Motta was a highly experienced Portuguese slave trader and was travelling to New York to purchase ships on behalf of the "Brazilian and Portuguese Slave Trade Association."[1] This shadowy organization supposedly had tentacles in Europe, South America, and the Caribbean, and was deeply engaged in the illegal slave trade between various parts of the African coast and Cuba. With Motta's departure from Havana, Crawford suspected that the "Association" was now aiming to bring the US into its spider's web of illicit dealings. Fearing the worst, Crampton immediately informed the American authorities of Crawford's news. He also wrote to Anthony Barclay, the British consul in New York, who watched Motta's movements closely when he arrived in Lower Manhattan, just a few weeks after Crawford's tipoff from Havana.[2]

Crawford's report highlights important dynamics of the slave trade during the nineteenth century. On the one hand, the traffic was illegal and being suppressed. By the time Motta arrived in New York, every major slave trading nation had long since banned the traffic. These prohibitions forced slave traders who wished to continue their work to operate underground. The British, especially, were attentive to the ongoing trade wherever it occurred and were most committed to squashing it completely. Many of the traffickers in the "Association" cited by Crawford were on the move precisely because they were under pressure from states seeking to

[1] Crawford to FO, Jan. 28, 1854, in FO to Crampton, Mar. 6, FO84/948, TNA.
[2] Crampton to Barclay, Mar. 30, 1854, Barclay to Crampton, Apr. 5, 1854, Crampton to FO, Feb. 19, 1854, FO84/948, TNA.

suppress the trade. Motta himself had actually been kicked out of Cuba by the island's governor, Captain General Juan de la Pezuela, in the spring of 1854 under suspicion of trafficking. On the other hand, the existence of the Association indicated that states had not succeeded in suppressing the trade entirely. The trade to Brazil and Cuba, in particular, reached records levels *after* it was formally abolished in the early nineteenth century. Behind this growth lay rising demand for slave labor and strong attachments to the trade in Africa. In addition, despite abolishing the trade, many powers had deep vested interests in permitting it to continue. In Cuba, Pezuela was one of the few governors to seriously tackle the slave trade up to the 1860s. Furthermore, some nations, including the US, were determined to suppress certain forms of American participation in the slave trade, but not others. Indeed, if any nation best summed up the contradictions and entanglements of the illegal slave trade, it was the US. Washington's limited approach to suppression presented opportunities for traffickers such as Motta and was why he journeyed to the US after his expulsion from Cuba.

This chapter identifies the origins of the American role in the illegal slave trade during the mid-nineteenth century by examining the international battle over the traffic up to Motta's arrival in the US. It begins with an overview of the slave trade up to the late 1840s. During this period, the traffic came under serious assault for the first time in most parts of the Atlantic basin. The pressure came mainly from reformers of various stripes, and eventually states, including Britain, which encouraged other states to give up their trades. Although these efforts succeeded in making the traffic illegal, they did not overcome a wide array of interests on both sides of the Atlantic basin that sought to continue the trade. In this context, the US, although no longer importing slaves, became a major player in the traffic to Brazil and Cuba. The second part of the chapter analyzes a renewed and international assault on the slave trade during the mid-nineteenth century.

Responding to internal and external pressures, several major slaving states finally took serious measures to suppress the illegal traffic. These efforts resulted in landmark achievements, yet the traffic remained protected in parts of the African coast and in Cuba. In addition, the US government made only limited efforts to suppress the traffic under the American flag. The final section describes how some traffickers, including Motta, responded to the midcentury assault on the slave trade by incorporating the US into their operations. Appreciating the weaknesses of American suppression, these traffickers quickly forged strategic relationships with local merchants, particularly in New York. Having secured these alliances, they set about creating a powerful slave trading network running between US ports, West Central Africa, and Cuba.

The US and the slave trade before 1850

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the US was entwined in a major international struggle over the future of the transatlantic slave trade. In contrast to the eighteenth century, when proslavery forces overmatched tepid opposition and drove the trade to record levels, the traffic now came under serious and sustained assault in many parts of the Atlantic basin. During this period, an array of ideological, economic, geopolitical pressures forced a large number of states to outlaw the trade. Yet powerful countervailing forces remained. Some nations were still committed to the trade, despite abolishing the traffic. Meanwhile, rather than dissipating, demand for enslaved African labor grew in the Americas, especially as planters pushed into new territory and turned more land over to slave-grown coffee, sugar, and cotton. A wide cast of merchants, including Americans, responded to this demand, supporting an underground slave traffic that still involved many parts of the Atlantic basin by the end of the 1840s.[3]

[3] One of the best overviews of this struggle remains David Eltis, *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1987).

In terms of individual states, the most serious assault on the trade came from Britain. Despite being the largest 'carrier' of slaves during the eighteenth century, a popular abolitionist campaign by religious and political reformers forced Parliament to ban the British traffic in 1807. The British were not the first to abolish their trade – the Danes abolished their traffic in 1803 and Haiti permanently closed a very large trade to its shores in 1804 – but British abolitionism had especially far-reaching implications. Sensing that further action could serve broader British objectives, including expanding free international trade (which Britain aimed to dominate), and curtailing supplies of new labor to the rivals of British Caribbean colonies, successive London governments internationalized its abolitionist campaign dramatically. One important feature of this effort was a sustained attempt to convince other powers, including Portugal and Spain, to abolish their trades. Britain was also the main force behind a network of international slave trade courts known as Courts of Mixed Commission, which were designed to adjudicate violations of slave trading treaties that participating nations had signed, usually with the British. By the 1830s, these tribunals were dotted around the Atlantic basin from Freetown in Sierra Leone to Rio de Janeiro. In addition, Britain created a slave trade suppression fleet known as the Africa Squadron to patrol the western coasts of Africa for illegal slave ships. In 1833, Britain burnished its antislavery credentials further by becoming the first major power after the Revolutionary Haitians to abolish slavery throughout its empire. By then, opposition to the slave trade, and even slavery itself, had become a core element of British state policy and national identity.[4]

[4] The literature on British abolitionism and suppression is enormous. Important works include, Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Omohundru Institute, UNC Press, 2006); Robin Blackburn, *The American Crucible: Slavery, Emancipation and Human Rights* (London & New York: Verso, 2011), 221-233; Christopher Lloyd, *The Navy and the Slave Trade: The Suppression of the African Slave Trade in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1968); Richard Huzzey, *Freedom Burning: Anti-Slavery and Empire in Victorian Britain* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012); Robert Burroughs, Richard Huzzey eds. *The Suppression of the Atlantic Slave Trade: British Policies, Practices and Representations of Naval Coercion* (Manchester: UK, University of Manchester Press, 2015). See also Jenny Martinez, *The Slave Trade and the Origins of International Human Rights Law* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Leslie Bethell, "The Mixed

The new republic of the US also took action against the trade early in the nineteenth century. Although North American participation in the slave trade had always been limited compared to other regions, Rhode Island slave ship owners and planters in South Carolina and Georgia had been strongly tied to the trade during the eighteenth century.[5] The traffic came under increasing criticism, however, particularly in the aftermath of the American Revolution (1775-1783). Although there was never a mass movement against the trade as in Britain, a peculiar abolitionist coalition gradually emerged in the US. Some opponents of the traffic, mainly in the North, where slavery itself was already marginal, objected to the traffic on religious and economic grounds. Others, especially in the South, were concerned about a growing African population in their midst. An important additional factor was Upper South planters who believed they already had sufficient numbers of enslaved laborers, and sought to raise the value of their existing slaves by halting the trade. The views of the traffic's proponents and detractors were eventually resolved in the Constitution in 1787, which permitted American participation in the trade for another twenty years. In the ensuing two decades, many US states banned the trade themselves before Congress outlawed American participation in the traffic completely in 1808.[6]

Slave traders' defiance of the 1808 Act and growing opposition to the illegal trade in the US resulted in further legislative measures during the Early Republic. Undeterred by the federal abolition law, Rhode Island slave traders brought thousands of enslaved Africans to the Spanish

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Commissions for the Suppression of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in the Nineteenth Century", *The Journal of African History,* 7, 1 (1966), 79-93.

[5] James McMillin, *The Final Victims: Foreign Slave Trade to North America, 1783-1810* (University of South Carolina Press, 2004); Jay Coughtry, *The Notorious Triangle: Rhode Island and The African Slave Trade, 1700-1807* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1981).

[6] For more on these views and the shift from the international to internal slave trade see, Adam Rothman, "The Domestication of the Slave Trade in the US," in Walter Johnson and David Brion Davis eds. *The Chattel Principle: Internal Slave Trades in the Americas* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2004), 32-54. Leonardo Marques, *The US and the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the Americas, 1776-1867* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), 12-55; Don Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic: An Account of the US Government's Relations to Slavery* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 135-146.

colony of Cuba, where the trade remained legal. Meanwhile, some slave traders, including the infamous Lafitte brothers of Louisiana, smuggled captives into the Louisiana Territory and Georgia, often intercepting Spanish slavers on their way to Cuba.[7] For many Americans, however, continued slave trading sat uneasily with their conception of the US, rather than the British, as the world's true beacon of liberty. In addition, to many policymakers, suppression of the slave trade, at least near US shores, promised to be a convenient pretext for pushing the Spanish out of Florida, which many sought to incorporate into the US. Moreover, growing demand for slave labor in the Deep South was increasingly being satisfied by another source: the slave trade from Upper South plantations. This traffic grew enormously throughout the first half of the nineteenth century and reduced the importance of the transatlantic trade. These objections to the trade eventually found legislative expression in a series of new Acts passed by Congress between 1818 and 1820. Among their provisions, the new statutes increased fines for slave trading offences such as owning or serving aboard slave ships, offered cash payments to informants, and even sent a few vessels to African waters to patrol for illicit American slavers. The 1820 Act also took the dramatic step of declaring the slave trade piracy, a crime punishable by death. This was a step not even the British would take until 1824.[8]

While the US made progress on suppression, albeit haltingly, other nations proved much less willing to take serious action against the trade. In France, Portugal, Spain, and Brazil,

[7] Marques, *The US*, 56-90; David Head, "Slave Smuggling by Foreign Privateers: The Illegal Slave Trade and the Geopolitics of the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic*, 33, 3 (2013): 433-462; Stephen M. Chambers, *No God But Gain: The Untold Story of Cuban Slavery, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Making of the US* (New York: Verso, 2015), 45-88; Don Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic*, 147-50; Ernest Obadele-Starks, *Freebooters and Smugglers: The Foreign Slave Trade in the US After 1808* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2007), 15-68; W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the US of America, 1638-1870* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1896), 109-118; Hollander, Craig. "Against a Sea of Troubles: Slave Trade Suppressionism During the Early Republic" (Ph.D Dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 2013).

[8] On this legislation, see Finkelman, Paul. "Regulating the African Slave Trade." *Civil War History* 54, no. 4 (2008): 379–405; Marques, *The US*, 91-101; Du Bois, *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade*, 118-130; Hollander, "Against a Sea" 90-136; Don Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic*, 150-2.

abolitionism remained tepid both in elite policy circles and in the public sphere until at least the 1830s, and in some cases, far beyond.[9] The weakness of abolitionist sentiment was partly because these powers were intimately connected to the slave trade. Ships under their colors dominated the traffic in the early nineteenth century, especially after British abolition and the suppressive measures in the US.[10] In addition, Spain, France, and Portugal were strongly tied to the trade through their Atlantic colonies. Portuguese Angola, for instance, had not only been the single most important slave exporting zone in Africa for centuries, but was sending record numbers of captives to the Americas in the early nineteenth century. Meanwhile, in French Guadeloupe, Martinique, and French Guiana, and Spanish Cuba and Puerto Rico, many planters sought new slave labor to boost sugar production, especially after many powers froze Haiti out of world markets in the early nineteenth century after the Haitian Revolution. In Brazil, planters and merchants remained deeply committed to the slave trade after independence from Portugal in 1822, especially as the coffee frontier opened up in the south.[11]

Despite their strong ties to the trade, many of these powers formally abolished the traffic in the early nineteenth century. Under pressure from the British, who enjoyed growing naval and commercial power, as well as military success during the Napoleonic Wars, all the major slave trading nations condemned the traffic at Congress of Vienna in 1815. Soon thereafter, France

[9] For the French case, see Lawrence Jennings, French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France, 1802-1848 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). For Portugal, see João Pedro Marques, *The Sounds of Silence: Nineteenth-Century Portugal And the Abolition of the Slave Trade,* Translated by Richard Wall (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2006). For Spain, see Christopher Schmidt-Nowara, *Empire and Antislavery: Spain, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, 1833-1874* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1999); Arthur F. Corwin, *Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886* (Austin TX,: Published for the Institute of Latin American Studies by the University of Texas Press, 1967).

[10] For the contours of the Spanish slave trade, see Alex Borucki, David Eltis, and David Wheat, 'Atlantic history and the slave trade to Spanish America', *American Historical Review* 120, 2, (2015), 433–61.

[11] For an overview of these developments, see Robin Blackburn, *The American Crucible: Slavery, Emancipation and Human Rights* (London & New York: Verso, 2011), 257-267, 285-99. On the impact of the Haitian Revolution on Cuban slavery, see Ada Ferrer, *Freedom's Mirror: Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

declared the slave trade smuggling, while Portugal agreed to abolish its trade north of the equator in 1818, and Spain its entire trade in 1820. In return, Britain gave £300,000 in compensation to Portugal and £400,000 to Spain. In 1826, the recently created Empire of Brazil promised to abolish its trade in 1830 in exchange for diplomatic recognition by Britain. A year after this treaty went into effect, with the trade to Brazil dipping sharply, the Brazilian legislature created its own law against the traffic. Meanwhile in Lisbon, Portugal became the final major 'carrier' of slaves to abolish the trade completely in 1836. In addition to these measures, Spain, Portugal, and Brazil agreed to participate in the Courts of Mixed Commission. Britain also secured the right to stop Spanish slave ships and search them for slaves in 1817 (with an updated agreement in 1835), and a more limited right to seize vessels under the Portuguese and Brazilian flags. Meanwhile, in Africa, besides Portuguese Angola, many slave exporting states signed abolition treaties with the British. By 1857, there were forty-five such treaties, including agreements with Cabinda and Dahomey, key exporting polities in West Central Africa and the Bight of Benin, respectively.[12]

Although these powers abolished their trades, few made serious efforts to enforce their bans, at least initially. The Portuguese, for example, largely turned a blind eye both to the slave trade in Angola and to illegal slavers sailing under their flag for much of the 1830s and early 1840s.[13] Angola's great slaving partner, Brazil, did likewise. Under the influence of the conservative Regresso movement, which was strongly tied to Brazilian planters, the Brazilian government rendered the 1831 law effectively toothless. The flagrant violations of these statutes and continued rejection of British demands to concede a comprehensive right of search agreement, led British Foreign Secretaries, Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston, to authorize British cruisers

[12] For an overview of these commitments, see Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 81-91.
[13] On the metropolitan context, see João Pedro Marques, *The Sounds of Silence: Nineteenth-Century Portugal And the Abolition of the Slave Trade,* Translated by Richard Wall (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2006), 99-157.

to capture all Portuguese and Brazilian vessels suspected of slave trading in 1839 and 1845, despite protests from Lisbon and Rio de Janeiro. Spain was especially duplicitous; making several agreements with the British, while at the same time welcoming slave ships to Cuba, and less frequently, to Puerto Rico.[14] Meanwhile, many coastal African states, which had been exporting slaves for centuries and saw little prospect in alternatives, failed to live up to their anti-slave trade commitments. One bright spot was France, which after failing to seriously suppress the illegal slave trade after 1818 and a subsequent abolition law in 1826, committed greater resources to suppression in the 1830s, when a new reformist administration came to power in Paris. By the 1840s, the French were patrolling the African coast as vigorously as the British, which contributed to a sharp decline in French participation in the trade.[15]

These powers' determination to continue the trade proved highly successful. Despite abolition laws, the traffic continued on a massive scale during the first half of the nineteenth century. In total, around 3.7 million captives boarded slave ships in Africa during this period.[16] As Figure 1.1 shows, the total number of captives embarking slave ships broadly increased from 1808, when the British and US bans went into effect, up to 1830. Strikingly, over a million captives embarked slavers after Portugal became the final carrier of slaves to outlaw the trade in 1836. Tens of thousands of others disembarked in the Americas in violation of various slave trading bans before that year. Overall, an average of around 60,000 captives a year endured the middle passage during the first half of the nineteenth century, although the annual figures fluctuated considerably, especially when treaties were about to go into effect, such as the Brazilian bans in 1830 and 1831.

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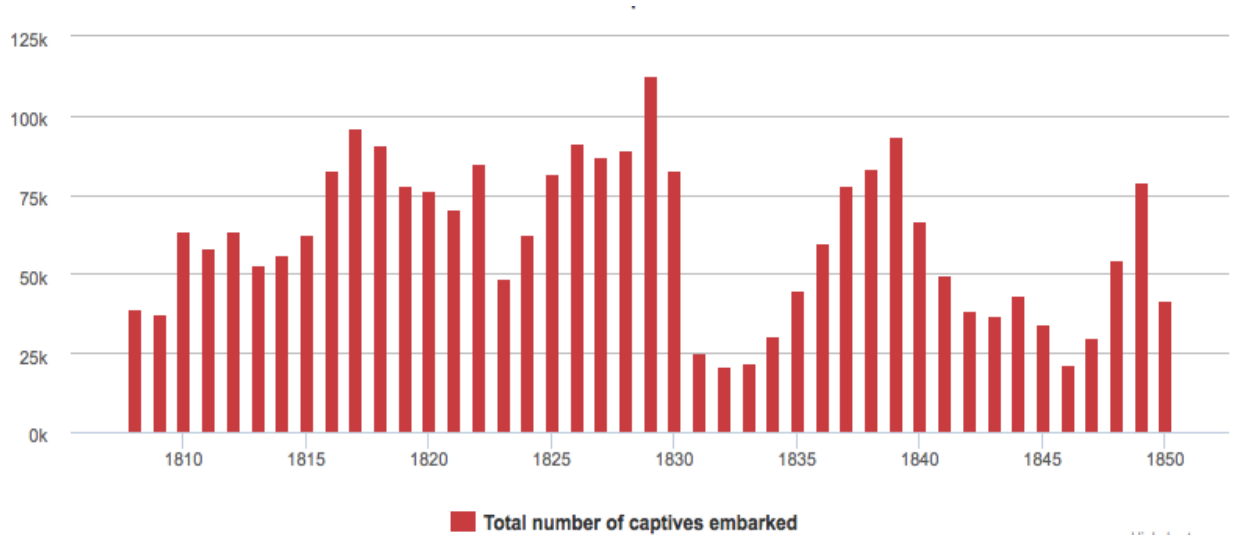
[14] The literature on the slave trade to Brazil and Cuba is very large. For a comparative perspective, see Márcia Regina Berbel, Rafael de Bivar Marquese, and Tâmis Parron, Marques, Leonardo trans. *Slavery and Politics: Brazil and Cuba, 1790-1850* (Alberquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 2016), 129-260. On Puerto Rico, see Joseph Dorsey, *Slave Traffic in the Age of Abolition: Puerto Rico, West Africa, and the Non-Hispanic Caribbean, 1815-1859* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florid Press, 2003).

[15] Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 87-8.

[16] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/x8DsCSln

Figure 1.1 *Number of captives embarking aboard slavers in Africa per year, 1808-1850*



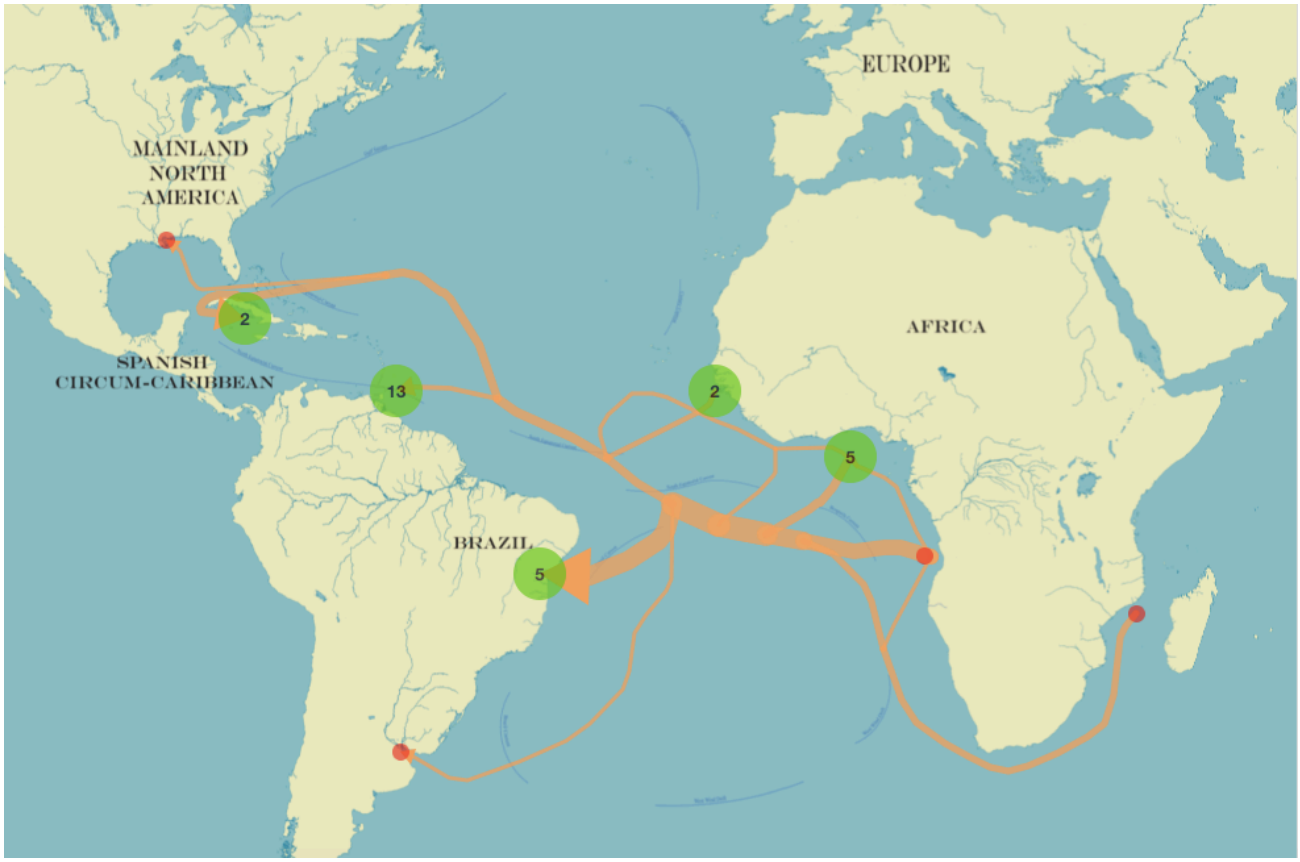
Source: 'Voyages', http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/KSOneK6T

The South Atlantic dominated the trade during the first half of the nineteenth century. As Figure 1.2 shows, West Central Africa, which comprised Angola to the south and the Lower Congo River basin to the north, was an especially important provenance zone for captives. Although this region had always been a major exporter of captives, its role increased from the 1830s. This pattern was partly a result of the Portuguese abolition of the slave trade north of the equator in 1820 and a subsequent right of search agreement with Britain, and partly due to the dominance of Brazilian import markets, which were always closely tied to West Central Africa. Between 1837 and 1850, six out of every ten captives departing African shores boarded slavers in this region.[17] Elsewhere, the Bights of Benin and Biafra, South Eastern Africa, especially Mozambique, and Sierra Leone

[17] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/OxwPrCwu. On this issue, see Eltis, David. *Economic Growth*, 99, 164-184. Domingues da Silva, Daniel; Eltis, David; Misevich, Philip; Ojo, Olatunji, 'The diaspora of Africans liberated from slave ships in the nineteenth century' *Journal of African History*, 55 (2014): 347-369; On shipping costs and voyage length, see Eltis, David and Stanley L. Engerman. "Fluctuations in Sex and Age Ratios in the Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1663-1864," *The Economic History Review* 46, no. 2 (1993): 314-7. For a comparison of numbers embarking in each region, 1700-1866, see, 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/GwzjYNZF.

remained important secondary export zones, especially after 1820.[18] Meanwhile, in the Americas, Brazil was by far the largest slave disembarkation zone; Cuba was a distant second. Between 1800 and 1850, Brazil accounted for seventy six percent of new arrivals, compared to sixteen percent for Cuba. By contrast, only one percent of the total, around 10,000 captives, arrived in the US.[19] Only a few hundred of that number disembarked after 1820, when Southern planters turned towards the domestic slave trade and the more stringent American anti-slave trade legislation went into effect.[20]

Figure 1.2. *Routes of captives in the transatlantic slave trade 1820-1850*



Source: slavevoyages.org. The numbers in the green discs refer to the number of smaller export zones within larger regions.

[18] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/9OVcgOnE
[19] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/TT8FfUWY
[20] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/jMjHq1p9

The organization and financing of the trade mirrored its main routes. Rather than Europe, which had dominated slave ship outfitting during the eighteenth century, most voyages originated in the Americas, especially in Brazil, and to a lesser extent Cuba. The voyages that set out to Africa from these regions were supported by tight connections between slave traders in slave importing regions and their agents on the African coast. Many prominent traffickers, such as the Brazilian, Francisco Antonio Flores, rose through the ranks, first operating in Rio de Janeiro and then in West Central Africa from the 1840s. Others, particularly in the Bight of Benin, such as Domingo Martins, had strong familial and business ties with Bahia.[21] Slave traders in Cuba tended to have weaker links with the African coast, due partly to Spain's historically limited presence in Africa, but some Havana traders, such as Pedro Martinez, had correspondents on the coast, especially in the Sherbro River in Sierra Leone.[22] Although it is difficult to determine sources of capital with precision, most direct investors in voyages were located along these routes. In the trade to Brazil, investors were generally Brazilians and Portuguese, while most speculators in the Cuban trade were Spaniards or Cubans. These organizational and financial patterns became even more marked during the 1830s as the French departed from the trade.[23]

Despite the sharp decline in the slave trade to the American South, the US played an important part in the traffic between other regions. One contribution was American built vessels. As Leonardo Marques has noted, demand for US vessels in major slaving ports such as Rio de Janeiro, Havana, and even on the African coast, was small, but growing in the 1820s, and ballooned from the mid 1830s. Although US vessel were also used by slave traders in Cuba, they were especially prominent in the traffic to Brazil. Between 1831 and 1850, 58 percent of voyages to

[21] For more on Flores and Martins, see chapter 2.
[22] Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 148-9.
[23] Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 145-63; Marques, *The United States*, 147-9.

Brazil took place in American ships. By contrast, the next largest builder of vessels in this branch of the trade, Brazil, was far behind at 15 percent. Across the entire trade, around two captives in every three arriving in the Americas during the 1830s and 1840s disembarked from an American-built vessel; around half a million in total.[24]

One of the important factors behind this shift was the growing supremacy of American shipbuilding during the early nineteenth century. Combining British and American shipping technologies and enjoying a plentiful supply of lumber from expansive forests, US shipbuilders had a considerable competitive edge over the European nations that formerly dominated slave ship outfitting. Building on these advantages, the US enjoyed a golden age in ship construction from the 1820s, as yards from Maryland to Maine produced record numbers of brigs, barques, and schooners. Many of these vessels, including the famed Baltimore clipper, were especially fast sailors. These craft were attractive to traffickers who sought to avoid cruisers patrolling the slaving coasts of Africa and the smaller number of cruisers policing Brazilian and Caribbean waters. Fast vessels also had the added benefit of shortening sailing times, which reduced slave mortality during the middle passage and costs such as food and sailors' wages.[25]

In addition to the prevalence of US-built vessels, the illegal slave trade was increasingly conducted under the American flag. In the Brazilian market, slave ships flew the US flag almost as regularly as Brazilian colors during the late 1840s.[26] The American flag also frequently appeared in the smaller trade to Cuba, especially in the late 1830s and 1840s, as the Spanish and Portuguese flags came partly under the jurisdiction of the British. Traffickers based in Brazilian and Cuban

[24] Marques, *The United States*, 143-7.
[25] Many of the fast slave ships used in midcentury illegal slave trade are found in William Crothers' book on US shipping: *The American-built clipper ship, 1850-1856* (Camden, ME: Intl Marine Pub Co., 1996). See also Marques, Leonardo. "US Shipbuilding, Atlantic Markets, and the Structures of the Contraband Slave Trade," in *The Rise and Demise of Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Atlantic World, eds., Philip Misevich and Kristin Mann* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2016), 196-219.
[26] Marques, *The United States*, 143-7.

slaving ports were careful to earn the right to fly the US flag, often purchasing or chartering vessels through a resident American, who acted as a straw buyer and retained legal ownership of the ship. This procedure allowed the vessel to retain the right to fly American colors.[27]

One of the reasons why traffickers sought the US flag was the protection it offered at sea. Americans jealously regarded the right of their merchant marine to sail free from interference from foreign powers, especially Britain. Indeed, frustration over British interference with American vessels and sailors during the Early Republic had been a major cause of the War of 1812. To many Americans, conceding the so-called Right of Search was a matter of principle; to do so, would be, as Secretary of State John Quincy Adams put it in 1822, "making slaves of ourselves."[28] Channeling this spirit, US administrations denied other nations' cruisers the right to stop and search American vessels, even in cases when they were clearly carrying slaves. When Congress did expand its suppression efforts, sovereignty remained paramount. In 1842, the US responded to rising American participation in the slave trade by forging the Webster Ashburton Treaty with Britain. This agreement required the US Navy to send a permanent, although still relatively small, squadron to the African coast, but did not grant the key concession, the Right of Search. In addition, in contrast with Spain and Portugal, which had been weakened by the loss of their American colonies during the Age of Revolutions, the US was becoming more powerful during the nineteenth century. In a sign of this growing strength, the US was the only major maritime power to deny Britain the right to interfere with its vessels by the 1830s, when the French conceded a limited Right of Search to British cruisers.[29]

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[27] For these transactions, see Marques, *The United States*, 154-5, 168-176

[28] Waldstreicher, David and Mason, Matthew eds., *John Quincy Adams and the Politics of Slavery: Selections from the Diary* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), 103.

[29] On Anglo-American tensions over the Right of Search and the Webster-Ashburton Treaty, see Fehrenbacher, *Slaveholding Republic*, 157-72.

More broadly, the value of US vessels and the American flag to slave traders was also bolstered by American prioritization of commerce over slave trade suppression. Although the US did send a small number of vessels into African and Brazilian waters, as well as to the Caribbean, especially after the Webster Ashburton Treaty, these cruisers departed US shores with the primary purpose of supporting American commerce rather than suppressing the slave trade.[30] Underscoring the point, US cruisers in African waters spent most of their time north of the equator, where American trade was thickest, rather than in the main slaving grounds, which were increasingly located south of the equator near West Central Africa. Indeed, despite pleas from US naval officers off the African coast, successive administrations refused to move the American supply depot from the Cape Verde Islands, near Upper Guinea, to a more southerly point. With these small deployments rarely in position to strike, slave traders held little fear of interception by American cruisers.[31]

Senior American diplomats maintained the same priorities as the Navy. Although the 1818-20 Acts prohibited US ownership of slavers, much depended on how far particular administrations would enforce the law. Most proved more interested in facilitating commerce than suppression. Successive secretaries of state were unprepared to interfere with the purchase or lease of American vessels in foreign ports, even when US consuls pointed out that local traffickers were snapping them up for the slave trade. During the 1840s, US consuls in Rio de Janeiro wrote repeatedly to the State Department for their assistance, but none came. As a result, Consul Gorham Parks wrote to Secretary of State John Clayton from Rio in 1849 that by following his orders from Washington,

[30] On these instructions see Fehrenbacher, *Slaveholding Republic*, 173.
[31] Warren S. Howard, *American Slavers and the Federal Law, 1837-1862* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1963), 42-3.

he had "been obliged in doing to aid more in the slave trade than perhaps any other Citizen of the US has done."[32]

Although the use of the American flag and the sheer number and type of vessels were the main and most easily quantifiable ways of measuring American contributions to the slave trade, a final important factor was the indirect support provided by legal American commerce with slave trading regions. During the nineteenth century, the US became the chief importer of Brazilian coffee and Cuban sugar. Soaring demand for these staples encouraged planters to seek enslaved labor to increase production on their estates. Meanwhile, American capital and manufactured goods surged into Brazil and Cuba, underpinning both slavery and the slave trade.[33] American vessels also delivered goods such as firearms to slaving zones in Africa, where they were used to purchase slaves for export to Brazil and Cuba.[34] The US was by no means alone in any of these contributions. The British probably supported the slave trade in even greater scale by importing Cuban sugar, providing credit to slave traders in Brazil and Cuba, and sending manufactured goods and new technologies to the Caribbean and South Atlantic.[35] Although the trade had been outlawed, international commerce brought almost every major power into the traffic in some way.

Americans citizens on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean were ultimately responsible for US participation in the trade. US merchants living in slaving ports typically played important roles as middlemen, working in close association with local traffickers. James Birckhead and Maxwell, Wright & Co., coffee exporters in Rio, were the main suppliers of vessels to Manoel Pinto da

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[32] Gorham Parks, to John Clayton, July 20, 1849, Roll 14, June 5, 1849-Dec. 27, 1850, Microfilm, T-172, NARA.
[33] On the Cuba and Brazil trades, see, respectively, Roland Ely, "The Old Cuba Trade: Highlights and Case Studies of Cuban-American Interdependence during the Nineteenth Century," *Business History Review*, Vol. 38, No. 4, (1964), 456-478 & Marques, *The United States*, 121-2.
[34] George Brooks, *Yankee traders, Old coasters and African middlemen: A history of American Legitimate Trade with West Africa in the Nineteenth Century* (Boston, MA: Boston University Press, 1970), 79-125.
[35] David Eltis, 'The British contribution to the nineteenth-century trans- atlantic slave trade', *Economic History Review*, 32, no.2, (1979): 211–27; Marques, *The United States*, 134-5

Fonseca, the major slave trader Brazil during the 1840s. Although they always remained a minority amongst crews, American ship captains and sailors sometimes took on the role of middlemen and occasionally sailed aboard slavers. Captains Joshua Clapp and Nathaniel Gordon, for example, were involved in several voyages between Angola and Brazil during the 1840s.[36] Meanwhile, US consuls became important conduits for the trade. Some, including Gorham Parks in Rio, were reluctant facilitators, but others, such as Nicholas Trist, the US consul in Havana during the 1830s, turned a blind eye to the trade and took kickbacks from traffickers.[37] Each of these American roles: middlemen, seamen, and consuls, would become key elements of the slave trade after 1850, when the traffic shifted to an axis that involved US ports directly.

The midcentury assault on the slave trade

From the mid-1840s to the early 1850s, many states on both sides of the Atlantic basin launched a renewed assault on the international slave trade. This onslaught was not centrally planned and depended on external forces as well as internal factors in slaving zones. The chief instigators were national governments, especially British, Portuguese, and Brazilian, although planters and slaves also played important roles. The effect of this wave was substantial. Most importantly, it ended the massive trade to Brazil almost completely, cutting the overall scale of the trade enormously, and causing serious ructions in slaving zones throughout the Atlantic basin. The demise of some branches of the traffic did not, however, herald the end of the entire trade. Critically, the market to Cuba remained protected thanks largely to a favorable geopolitical situation, while on the African

[36] On the role in British and US citizens in the Brazilian slave trade during this period, see Robert Conrad, *A World of Sorrow: The African Slave Trade to Brazil* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1986), 126-153. See also, Marques, *The US*, 154-5, 166-176; Gerald Horne, *The Deepest South: The US, Brazil, and the African Slave Trade* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 8-9, 29-30.
[37] Marques, *The United States*, 132-4; Obadele-Starks, *Freebooters and Smugglers*, 132-133; Du Bois, *The Suppression*, 164.

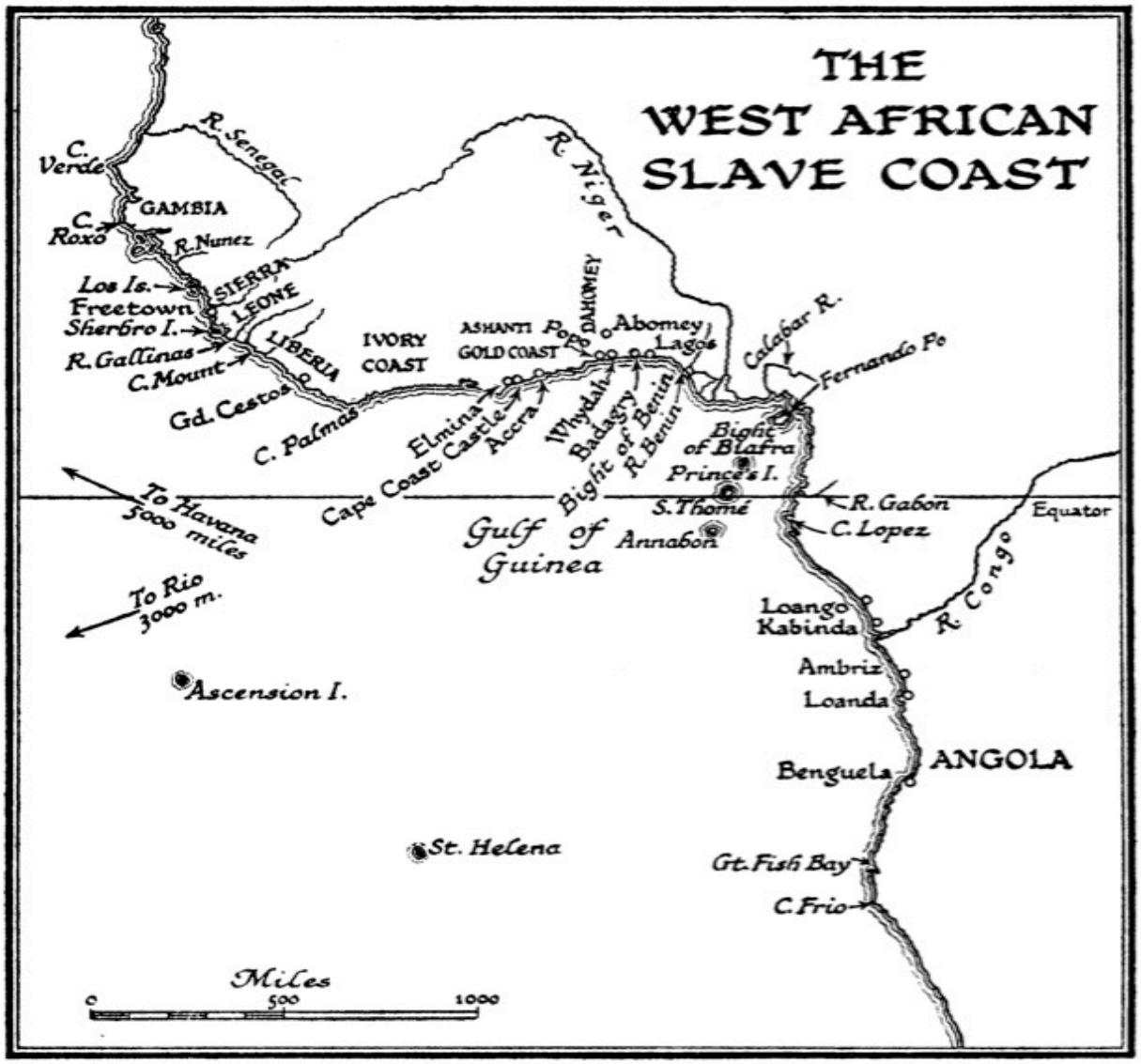
coast, traffickers moved their operations into areas beyond the control of threatening states. These changes paved the way for more direct US involvement in the trade after 1850.

Portugal dealt the first major blow of this assault during the 1840s in Angola. Successive Portuguese governments and colonial administrations had tolerated a very large slave trade from Angola and under the Portuguese flag since abolition in 1836, but by the mid-1840s, policymakers in the metropole were beginning to take suppression seriously. This change was partly in response to exterior pressure. In 1845, Britain and France agreed to allow one another to make treaties with African polities, including those on the northern margins of Angola near the Congo River, and in some cases to occupy the coast (see Figure 1.3). The agreement caused alarm in Lisbon, where leading statesman, including Prime Minister Sá da Bandeira, viewed Lower Congo polities as under Portugal's sphere of influence. At the same time, an ideological shift was taking place in Portugal. As historian João Pedro Marques had noted, although the traditional approach of tolerating the slave trade remained powerful, policymakers were beginning to identify suppression with national honor, largely because of Portugal's increasing isolation as a major violator of abolition laws. Indeed, Marques has contended that Portuguese action was stirred less by concern about territorial encroachment per se than by the slight to national honor caused by the British doing what Portugal ought to be doing itself.[38] The same principle applied to capturing Portuguese flagged vessels, which the British had been intercepting throughout the Atlantic basin since 1839. At the same time, suppression also served internal aims, including increasing Portuguese control over parts of Angola that enjoyed considerable independence from Luanda. The southern coastal town of Benguela was a particular concern. The colony's second largest slaving port after the capital, Benguela was heavily influenced by Brazilian traffickers. The connections between

[38] João Pedro Marques, *The Sounds of Silence: Nineteenth-Century Portugal And the Abolition of the Slave Trade,* Translated by Richard Wall (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2006), 158-192.

Benguela and Brazil raised broader concerns in Portugal that Angola saw its future with Rio da Janeiro rather than Lisbon.[39]

Figure 1.3. *The slaving coasts of West and West Central Africa during the nineteenth century* [*]



[39] Mariana Candido, "South Atlantic Exchanges: The Role of Brazilian-Born Agents in Benguela, 1650-1850." *Luso- Brazilian Review* 50, 1 (2013): 53-82; Roquinaldo Ferreira, *Cross-Cultural Exchange in the Atlantic World: Angola and Brazil during the Era of the Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 203-241; Ferreira, "Biography as social history. The Ferreira Gomes clan and the worlds of slaving in the South Atlantic," in *Varia Historia* 29, 51 (2013): 649-75. For a survey of Portuguese ideas about empire between 1820 and 1850, see Gabriel Paquette, *Imperial Portugal in the Age of Atlantic Revolutions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 316-71.

[*] Map from Lloyd, *The Navy and the Slave Trade*, 13.

Spurred by these concerns, Portugal began suppressing the traffic more vigorously during the mid to late 1840s. Much of this effort focused on the coasts of Portuguese Africa. Portugal had already stationed most of its warships in Angolan waters from 1840, but from 1843 to 1850 these cruisers nearly doubled the number of slavers they intercepted.[40] Many of the captured slavers were adjudicated at a Portuguese prize court in Luanda, which was established in 1844, while other cases were heard at Luanda's Court of Mixed Commission, which was created under joint British and Portuguese jurisdiction the same year.[41] These actions occurred despite complaints from the Brazilian government on behalf of Brazilian ship owners and slave trade investors. Meanwhile, the Portuguese and British jointly attacked the traffic in and around Benguela, which not only damaged the trade in southern Angola, but brought the region under greater control of Luanda. In the capital itself, officials brought a growing number of slave traders to trial for violations of slave trade laws. In addition, although the Portuguese refused to permit British incursions north of Angola, in 1847, they granted Britain the right to patrol much of coastal Mozambique and renewed the agreement three years later.[42] Much of this action would continue into the 1850s as Portugal increasingly viewed suppression, imperial control, and expansion in Africa as convenient bedfellows.

The effect of Portuguese and British action in Angola was to relocate rather than eliminate the slave trade in West Central Africa. On the one hand, slave exportations declined markedly from Angola. Luanda and Benguela, the two largest Angolan slaving ports for centuries, finally became small players in the traffic, at least in terms of departures, which dropped tenfold after 1845 compared to the 1830s. On the other hand, the slave trade was shifting elsewhere. Many

[40] Marques, *The Sounds of Silence*, 258-64.
[41] Bethell, "The Mixed Commissions" 90-1; Martinez, *The Slave Trade*, 76.
[42] Marques, *The Sounds of Silence*, 167-70.

traffickers simply moved their operations from Angola to the north, just beyond Portuguese control. In the Congo River, especially, a network of small, decentralized states and many secluded creeks and thick brush gave these slave traders added protection from outside interference. The movement north had already been taking place since the 1830s, but intensified during the late 1840s. At the same time, Luanda remained intimately connected to the trade. Traffickers in the capital continued to receive slaves from the interior, but instead of shipping them directly to the Americas, now sent them north for incoming ships.[43] Meanwhile, rather than diminishing, the slave trade as a whole increased, both from West Central Africa and Mozambique, during the late 1840s. Between 1845 and 1849, traffickers sent around 50,000 captives from West Central Africa and Mozambique each year. These figures were marginally higher than the annual 46,000 sent during the late 1830s and much higher than the 29,000 or so, who embarked during the first half of the 1840s.[44]

A more consequential blow against the slave trade was struck in Brazil in 1850. Although there remains considerable debate among historians about the origins of Brazilian suppression, including the impact of a slave rebellion in the southern Paraíba Valley in 1848 and a yellow fever outbreak in 1849-50, both of which Brazilian legislators and writers linked to the slave trade, the main impetus seems to have come from Britain.[45] In 1846, Lord Palmerston became Foreign

[43] On these transitions, see Roquinaldo Ferreira, "The Suppression of the Slave Trade and Slave Departures from Angola, 1830s-1860s", in Eltis and Richardson, *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 313-334 & Ferreira, *Dos sertões ao atlântico: tráfico ilegal de escravos e comércio lícito em Angola, 1830–1860* (Luanda: Kilombelombe, 2012), 137-146.
[44] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/ovuMSlAj.
[45] For some of these debates see, Márcia Regina Berbel, Rafael de Bivar Marquese, and Tâmis Parron, Marques, Leonardo trans. *Slavery and Politics: Brazil and Cuba, 1790-1850* (Alberquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 2016), 241-60; Dale Graden, *Disease, Resistance, and Lies: The Demise of the Transatlantic Slave Trade to Brazil and Cuba* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2014); Jeffrey D. Needell, "The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade in 1850: Historiography, Slave Agency and Statesmanship." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 33, no. 4 (November 1, 2001): 681–711; Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 213-217; Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade*, 296-363.

Minister for a second time and was determined to press Brazil even further than his predecessor Lord Aberdeen, whose so-called Aberdeen Act in 1845 had unilaterally given the British navy to right to intercept Brazilian slavers, even in Brazilian waters. Under Palmerston's direction and in association with the British minister, James Hudson, and consuls in Brazil, the Foreign Office also began a series of convert operations including bribing Brazilian politicians, funding the nascent Brazilian abolitionist press, and hiring spies to report on the movement of illegal slavers during the late 1840s. The spies became especially useful when Palmerston strengthened the British naval presence off the Brazilian coast in 1849. With the British fleet reinforced, seaborne operations became much more aggressive and successful. During 1849 and early 1850, British cruisers entered Brazilian ports, opened fire on a coastal fort, and intercepted dozens of slavers. Much of this action took place just outside the main Brazilian slave trading hub, Rio de Janeiro.[46]

The aggressive British assault left Brazilian policymakers with little alternative, but to make suppression effective. Although Brazilian sovereignty had been flagrantly violated, and some planters who relied heavily on the slave trade argued for war with Britain, few supported this proposition. Not only was the Brazilian navy no match for Britain's, but having become increasingly isolated as a slaving nation, Brazil could expect little support from other nations in the event of open hostilities. Even the US, which had denied European powers the right to interfere with affairs in the Americas since the Monroe Doctrine in 1824, and was itself deepening its commitment to slavery in the US South and the West, was not prepared to come to the aid of a power so clearly committed to the slave trade. Lacking support from abroad, the Brazilian government aimed to preserve the Empire's sovereignty by finally taking serious action against

[46] Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade*, 309-331. For more on the British use of a spy, Alcoforado, in Brazil, see chapter 4. On Rio, see Manolo G. Florentino, 'Slave trading and slave traders in Rio de Janeiro, 1790–1830', in José Curto and Paul E. Lovejoy, eds., *Enslaving connections: changing cultures of Africa and Brazil during the era of slavery* (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2004), 57–79.

the traffic. In the summer of 1850 the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies and Senate passed a new law, which included a raft of provisions targeting slave ships, their owners, and various accomplices. Meanwhile, the government strengthened the Brazilian naval deployment off the coast and the police began searching estates for newly arrived slaves. Several more slavers would appear on Brazilian shores during the 1850s, but the decline was precipitous. By 1852, the largest branch of the slave trade was effectively dead.[47]

The Brazilian government's new measures had a significant impact on slave traders and their accomplices in Brazil. Some receded from the trade, hoping that the crackdown would be temporary and that they could return to slaving in the future. Others faced punishment or expulsion. The police, especially in Rio, arrested and charged several Brazilian traffickers with slave trading offences. Meanwhile, the Brazilian government expelled several prominent Portuguese traffickers who had earned considerable wealth through the traffic, including the notorious Joaquim da Fonseca.[48] Many of these exiles, including José Bernardino de Sa and Augusto Gomes Netto returned to their homes in northern Portugal and Lisbon with large sums of money and purchased estates and titles through the Portuguese government.[49] Back in Brazil, American citizens engaged in the trade also scattered. In the spring of 1852, Edward Kent, the US consul in Rio, reported to the State Department that "[t]he permanent and temporary residents in this city, natives of the US, who were generally understood to have some connection directly or indirectly with this trade have failed in business, and nearly all of them have departed to 'places unknown.'" Kent, who was apparently glad to see their departure, perhaps not least because US policy itself had made his

[47] After 1852, 520 captives disembarked on Brazilian shores. 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/OwhlEnZD. Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade*, 331-363; Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 214-6.
[48] For a summary of these measures see Consul Edward Kent to Daniel Webster, Apr. 10, 1852, Roll 15, Feb 8, 1851-Aug. 16, 1854, Microfilm, T-172, NARA.
[49] W. Smith to Foreign Office, Mar. 19, 1851 & Edwin Johnston to Foreign Office, July 21, 1851, FO84/841, TNA; Marques, *The US*, 189-90.

office complicit in their dealings, added, "I trust they will never return to disgrace this country and outrage humanity."[50]

The closure of the trade to Brazil reverberated powerfully in West Central Africa. The impact on the slaving community was especially great. In 1851, George Brand, the British vice consul in Luanda, reported that among the slaving merchants of Angola, "with the exception of two or three possessed of a little property and who have withdrawn from here and are not now solely dependent on the traffic, there is scarcely one believed to be in a state of solvency."[51] With the closure of the Brazilian trade, slave traders' credit was also drying up. According to Brand, one of the leading traffickers in the region had attempted to draw bills of exchange on Rio but they were rejected, "there being no funds belonging to him there" since "no slaves had been received."[52] Because the slave trade formed such a major part of the economy in coastal West Central Africa, the effects of the collapse of the Brazilian trade went beyond traffickers. Brazilian gold, which was formerly abundant, especially in Luanda, was now scarce. Moreover, according to Brand, slave traders' inability to pay their debts, created "distrust in all commercial transactions."[53]

The British and the Portuguese attempted to capitalize on these disruptions by stepping up their suppression efforts. During the early 1850s, British cruisers heavily patrolled northern West Central Africa, especially around the town of Ambriz, which lay just beyond Portuguese jurisdiction. They also increased their attempts to make treaties with African polities, resulting in accords with Francisco Franque, a powerful trader in Cabinda (1853), and the Queen of Ambrizette, Cangala (1855). Meanwhile, the Portuguese, concerned about British encroachment into its sphere of influence under the pretext of suppression, bolstered its naval patrols, increased

[50] Edward Kent to Daniel Webster, Apr. 10, 1852, Roll 15, Feb 8, 1851-Aug. 16, 1854, Microfilm, T-172, NARA.
[51] George Brand to Foreign Office, Jan. 13, 1851, FO84/841, TNA.
[52] George Brand to Foreign Office, Jan. 13, 1851, FO84/841, TNA.
[53] George Brand to Foreign Office, Jan. 13, 1851, FO84/841, TNA.

its military presence in northern Angola, and occasionally launched attacks on coastal slaving factories.[54]

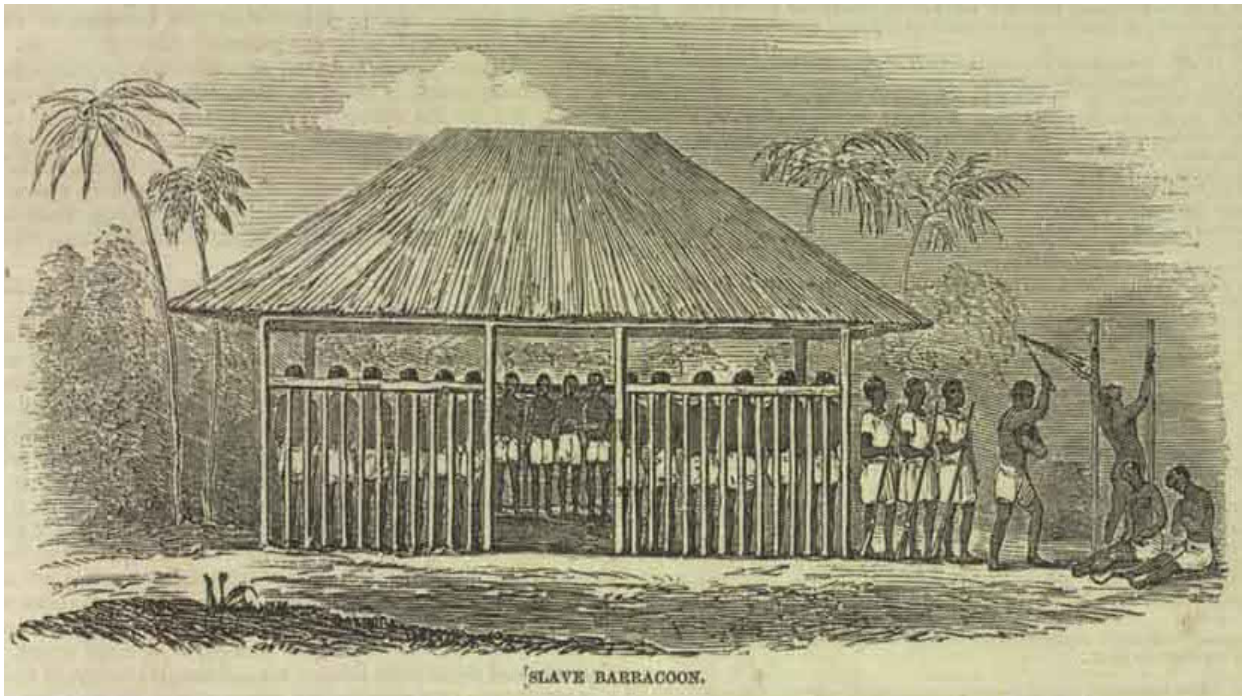
Unlike in Brazil and Angola, however, these efforts were not successful. Although several African polities made anti-slave trade treaties, they were not committed to ending the trade. Finding limited demand for alternative exports, they were willing to play all sides: signing treaties with the British, while accommodating the mostly Brazilian, Portuguese, and Luso-African traffickers on the coast. In this way, they were able to keep the suppression powers at arm's length. Meanwhile, the slave traders themselves remained adaptable. In 1851, when Brazilian suppression shook the region, traffickers in the Lower Congo River forced slaves to gather ground nut and orchilla weed for export, while planning to sell the captives themselves at a later date.[55]

Although suppression in West Central Africa remained an ongoing struggle, Britain stepped up attacks in other parts of the African coast. In 1849, the same year that British cruisers began aggressive action in Brazilian waters, the African Squadron launched a direct assault on slaving factories on the Gallinas River, between the British colony of Sierra Leone and Liberia. The River, which at its mouth was really a series of shallow lagoons, was a haven for the few Spanish slave trading agents on the African coast, such as Pedro Blanco, as well as a number of Portuguese and Brazilians who traded heavily with Bahia.[56] Although this part of the coast was a much smaller exporting zone than West Central Africa, accounting for around a six percent of slave exports during the 1830s and 1840s, it was regionally significant; during the 1830s, slave trader Theo Canneau had described the Gallinas River as "the notorious slave mart of the

[54] For the 1853 treaty with Francisco Franque at Cabinda, see FO881/503, TNA. For the treaty with Cangala, see Henry Need, Sept. 15, 1855, ART/10, National Maritime Museum.
[55] George Brand to Foreign Office, Jan. 13, 1851, FO84/841, TNA.
[56] On Blanco and Gallinas, see Captain Theophilus. *A Slaver's Log Book or 20 Years' Residence in Africa: The Original 1853 Manuscript by Captain Theophilus Conneau*. Introduction by Mabel M. Smythe, ed. 1854. (London: Prentice -Hall International, 1976), 243-7.

Northwest Coast of Africa."[57] Noting the importance of the River, the British Navy had destroyed factories at Gallinas in 1840, during Palmerston's first stint as Foreign Secretary, and then in 1845. In February 1849, the Navy attacked again, destroying three factories and driving at least 34 slave traders – 6 Spanish, 14 Brazilian, and 14 Portuguese – from the River.[58] This assault, in conjunction with the closure of trade to Brazil, was decisive in bringing the Gallinas slave trade to a close. After 1850, only one slaver purchased captives in the River.[59] Meanwhile, as Figure 4 shows, the British press reported, and celebrated, news of the attack.

Figure 1.4. "A barracoon at the back of the destroyed factories at Gallinas," *Illustrated London News*, 1849.



[57] Conneau, *A Slaver's Log Book,* 246. On Sierra Leone and the Windward Coasts' share of the trade, see 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/tctHqTyZ
[58] James Hudson to Palmerston, Mar. 23, 1850, FO84/803, TNA. Christopher Lloyd, *The Navy and the Slave Trade: The Suppression of the African Slave Trade in the Nineteenth Century* (London and New York: Routledge, 1968), 117.
[59] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/c5WI6AGw

Along the coast, in the Bight of Benin, the British took further aggressive action against the trade. The Bight was second only to West Central Africa in terms of slave exports during the mid-nineteenth century. Lagos was an especially important hub, accounting for 73,000 embarkations during the 1840s, around two thirds of the regional total.[60] The trade from Lagos was maintained chiefly by Brazilian and Portuguese slave traders such as Francisco da Souza, who operated in conjunction with King Kosoko, the ruler of Lagos from 1845-51. Their operations were permanently disrupted, however, in 1851, when Royal Navy cruisers bombarded the port. After this successful attack from the sea, the British deposed Kosoko and replaced him with a new king, Akitoye, who signed an anti-slave trade treaty aboard a British cruiser and promised to work against the trade. Having become what Robin Law has called a "quasi-protectorate of Britain," Lagos would be annexed completely by the British in 1861.[61] Meanwhile, in neighboring Dahomey, one of the key provenance zones of slaves departing the Bight of Benin, the King Ghezo, having heard what had happened in Lagos, signed a treaty with the British and promised to expel the Portuguese and Brazilian slave traders from his jurisdiction. Yet, unlike Lagos, Dahomey and its main slaving ports, Ouidah, were not at the mercy of the British. Dahomey was a large and powerful state, and Ouidah sat back from the Atlantic Ocean, rendering British cruisers much less threatening. With these advantages, some traffickers, including Carlos de Souza Nobre, moved their operations to Ouidah after the Lagos attack, and kept the slave trade open. As in West

[60] Ojo, Olatunji. "Correspondence of the Lagos Slave Trade" in Ojo and Hunt, Nadine, eds. *Slavery in Africa and the Caribbean: A History of Enslavement and Identity Since the Eighteenth Century* (New York, NY: I.B. Tauris, 2012): 93-4.

[61] Robin Law, *Ouidah: The social history of a West African slaving 'port' 1727–1892* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2004), 216; Ojo, "Correspondence," 85-121. On the attack, see Lloyd, *The Navy and the Slave Trade*, 149-162. See also, Kristin Mann, *Slavery and the Birth of an African City: Lagos, 1760-1900* (Bloomington, IL: University of Indiana Press, 2007), 84-102.

Central Africa, the embarkation zones in the Bight of Benin had narrowed, but not entirely closed.[62]

As the slave trade came under renewed pressure in Brazil and on the African coast, the traffic to Cuba had almost dried up. After large numbers of imports in the early 1840s, the traffic declined sharply in 1845. This change was caused in large part by planters' concerns about an uprising by slaves and free blacks. In late 1843 and early 1844 rumors had abounded that an insurrection was about to break out in the key slaving importing zone of Matanzas and would then spread to other parts of the island. Although the rebellion never took place, the supposed conspiracy, which came to be known as *La Escalera*, had serious repercussions. In addition to torturing and executing scores of slaves and free blacks, whom they believed were involved in the conspiracy, the colonial government, led by Captain General Leopoldo O'Donnell, took serious steps to curb the illegal slave trade to the island.[63] In 1845, a new Penal law came into effect, which stiffened punishments for crews aboard illegal slavers.[64] This step was mainly a response to the demands of planters, who had formerly benefitted from the traffic, but now feared that further arrivals would foment new rebellions. In this new context, illicit imports of slaves dropped from around 10,000 in 1844 to 1,000 in 1845. They would remain around 1,000 to 2,000 for the remainder of the 1840s. Meanwhile, Cuban planters began to seriously consider importing labor from other sources, such as China and the Yucatan Peninsula.[65]

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[62] Robin Law, *Ouidah: The social history of a West African slaving 'port' 1727–1892* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2004), 216-221. For a rare captive's account of an illegal voyage, which departed near Ouidah in 1845, see Law, Robin, and Paul Lovejoy, eds. *The Biography of Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua: His Passage from Slavery to Freedom in Africa and America* (Princeton, N.J.: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2007).
[63] Michele Reid-Vazquez, *The Year of the Lash: Free People of Color in Cuba and the Nineteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Athens, Ga: University of Georgia Press, 2011); Robert Paquette, *Sugar is Made With Blood: The Conspiracy of La Escalera and the Conflict between Empires over Slavery in Cuba* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1990).
[64] Berbel, Marquese, and Parron, *Slavery and Politics*, 221-2.
[65] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/mWdO4N4O.

The Cuban assault on the slave trade did not, however, represent a fatal blow to the trade. As in other regions of the Atlantic world after rebellions (or rumors of rebellion), planter demand for enslaved Africans was not permanently depressed. By the 1830s, the island had become the world's largest sugar producer. Sugar cultivation was labor intensive and production on a large scale depended on an abundance of coerced workers. With the slave trade depressed, the labor problem became acute, especially since natural reproduction amongst Cuban slaves remained low and large imports from China and Yucatan failed to materialize until the mid-1850s. Some sugar planters were able to secure additional labor during the late 1840s by purchasing slaves from the island's coffee plantations, many of which were devastated by a series of hurricanes that swept through the island in the mid-1840s, but this supply was not sustainable.[66] Unlike the US and Brazil, which developed robust interregional slave trades by the mid-1850s, Cuba lacked a large internal supply of captive laborers.[67]

Another problem was that opposition to the slave trade was inherently weak. The Penal Law had been largely shaped by Cuban planters and actually prevented the authorities from entering planters' estates to search for newly imported slaves (known in Cuba as *bozales*).[68] The colonial authorities had also used *La Escalera* to silence internal critics of Spanish policy in Cuba, including on the slave trade. In the aftermath of the conspiracy, O'Donnell had exiled dozens of island-born whites, known as creoles, who attacked the authorities during the 1830s and early 1840s. One of their main arguments was that Spain encouraged the traffic to keep creoles from rebelling against colonial rule because doing so would likely instigate an explosive race war that

[66] Louis A. Pérez, *Winds of Change: Hurricanes and the Transformation of Nineteenth-Century Cuba* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 97-8
[67] On the internal Brazil and US trades, see essays in Walter Johnson and David Brion Davis eds. *The Chattel Principle: Internal Slave Trades in the Americas* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2004), 291-370.
[68] Berbel, Marquese, and Parron, *Slavery and Politics*, 222.

would ultimately rebound on creole themselves. In addition to these Cuban concerns, there was little pressure for suppression back in Spain, where abolitionism remained in nascent form, and merchants and industrialists, especially in Catalonia, were closely tied to Cuban sugar interests. Indeed, many of Cuba's most important traffickers during the 1830s and 1840s, such as Pedro Martinez, had been born in Spain and maintained strong ties to the Iberian Peninsula.[69]

If pressure to suppress the trade definitively was not forthcoming within the Spanish Empire, there were limits to the force that could be applied from the outside. Unlike in Brazil and on parts of the African coast, the British had to tread carefully in Cuba. One important factor was that Spain was a European nation, whose sovereignty the British government felt more duty bound to respect than the rights of Brazil or African polities. In addition, the Anglo-Spanish Treaty of 1835 forbade any additional suppression measures by the British in the Cuban trade. Even more compelling was the role of the increasingly powerful US. After American annexation of Texas in 1848, many US expansionists, including planters and leading policymakers, turned their attention to Cuba. Spain resisted American pressure to surrender the island, leaning heavily on the British, who also opposed growing US aggression in the Caribbean. In return, Britain sought robust Spanish action on the slave trade to Cuba. Spain, however, would prove adept at playing off London's fear of US expansion against its opposition to the slave trade during the 1850s.[70]

The midcentury assault on the slave trade had therefore produced mixed results. On the one hand, the overall traffic declined sharply from record highs during the 1840s. The blow to the slave trade in the South Atlantic had been especially powerful, permanently ending the largest

[69] Christopher Schmidt-Nowara, *Empire and Antislavery: Spain, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, 1833-1874* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1999), 14-36, 51-72; Martín Rodrigo, 'Spanish merchants and the slave trade: from legality to illegality, 1814–1870', in Josep M. Fradera and Christopher Schmidt Nowara, eds., *Slavery and antislavery in Spain's Atlantic Empire* (New York: Berghahn, 2013), 176–99.
[70] David Murray, *Odious Commerce: Britain, Spain and the Abolition of the Cuban Slave Trade* (Cambridge University Press, 1980), 222-40.

slaving nexus in the history of the traffic between Angola and Brazil. Under pressure from the British, especially, the trade also collapsed in parts of West Africa, including the Gallinas River and Lagos. On the other hand, several regions remained open to the trade. Although traffickers in Ouidah and other parts of the African coast remained open to exporting slaves, the main threat came from northern West Central Africa and Cuba, where the traffic was merely depressed, rather than permanently suppressed.

The arrival of the Slave Trade in US ports

The midcentury assault on the slave trade fragmented the trafficking community in the Atlantic world. Although many slave traders withdrew from the traffic, around a dozen, mostly from Brazil and Africa, immigrated to the US with the aim of creating a new slaving trading network running between US ports, Africa, and Cuba. Although they had been pushed out of their respective slaving zones, these traffickers recognized that US ports held great potential as places for organizing the trade. New York, in particular, enjoyed a large and growing legal commerce with slaving zones, and traffickers would quickly forge strategic ties with merchants in these trades. Powerful national political forces would also protect their work, including continued American commitment to sovereignty at sea and rising national interest in incorporating Cuba into the US. Both issues superseded American concerns about the slave trade and paved the way for a decade of slave trading in US ports.

During the early 1850s, slave traders, especially in the South Atlantic, struggled to maintain a foothold in the traffic. Since the trade to Brazil showed little sign of reopening, a small number of traffickers travelled to Cuba, aiming to break into the trade to the island. In 1851, Augusto Botelho, a Portuguese living in Brazil, joined a small group of Portuguese and Brazilian slave

traders who established themselves in Cuba. In 1853, the British consul general in Havana, Joseph Crawford, reported that Botelho was "acting for a Brazilian Company of Slave Traders who had establishments at Trinidad [on the South side of Cuba], at Los Perros on the North side and in this city."[71] This group, also described by Crawford as the "Brazilian and Portuguese Slave Trade Association" had some success, receiving several cargos on various parts of the island. Most, if not all, of its members were ousted, however, in 1854 by a new Captain General, Juan de la Pezuela, who was less sympathetic to the slave trade than his predecessors, and found it easier to take action against the Brazilians and Portuguese than local slave traders who were often politically connected.[72] In the spring of 1854, Pezuela captured Botelho expelled him from the island. The same year, they arraigned and deported two other foreign traffickers, Antonio Severino de Avellar and Gaspar de Motta.[73]

Having been expelled from their respective slaving regions, each of these individuals joined a small stream of traffickers on their way to the US. As Leonardo Marques has noted, during the early to mid-1850s, around a dozen slave traders, mainly from Brazil, West Central Africa, and Portugal, converged on US ports aiming to create a new node in the traffic to Cuba. Mainly of Portuguese and Brazilian birth, they were highly experienced people-traffickers, particularly in the illegal South Atlantic trade. By the mid-1850s, they had established themselves in the merchant and shipping district of Lower Manhattan, where they became known by some observers as the

[71] See enclosure in Crawford to Foreign Office, June 27, 1853, FO84/905, TNA
[72] For Captain General Valentín Cañedo's limited action against the notorious Spanish trafficker Julián Zulueta in 1853, see Crawford to Foreign Office, Aug. 9, 1853, FO84/906, TNA.
[73] Gefatura Principal de Policía to Gobr. Supr. Civil, 2 January and 1 February 1854, Legajo 427/20575, Gobierno General, Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Havana, (henceforth GG, ANC); Secretaría Politica to Teniente Gobernador de Cárdenas, 17 February 1854, Legajo 427/20575, GG, ANC; For more on Avellar, see Ferreira, *Dos sertões ao atlântico*, 146-52.

"Portuguese Company."[74] Although New York would remain their base until the early 1860s, many of these slave traders would also operate out of other US ports, including Boston, Baltimore, and New Orleans. They would also move around the Atlantic basin to organize voyages, supervise transatlantic voyages in person, and, occasionally, to escape pressure from the American authorities.[75]

Manoel Basílio da Cunha Reis typified these immigrant traffickers. Born in Portugal in 1822, Cunha Reis had moved to Brazil as a young man and operated in Rio de Janeiro, the shipping and finance center of the illegal slave trade in South America.[76] By the early 1850s, he had established himself at Ambriz, one of the main slave depots north of Angola in West Central Africa. In 1854, he was described by the British Foreign Office as a "notorious slave dealer" who kept captives in barracoons, or ramshackle prisons, on the Congo river.[77] The same year, the British and Portuguese targeted Cunha Reis, eventually running him out of town. He arrived in New York in April 1855, along with another trafficker from West Central Africa, José da Silva Maia Ferreira.[78] They were joined by other traffickers including Botelho, Avellar, Motta, as well as José da Costa Lima Viana, José Lucas Henriques da Costa, and José Pedro da Cunha. Each of these men had similar career trajectories and experience in the South Atlantic slave trade.[79]

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[74] Leonardo Marques, *The United States*, 188-200. See also, Marques, "Um último triângulo notório: contrabandistas portugueses, senhores cubanos e portos norte-americanos na fase final do tráfico transatlântico de escravos, 1850-1867" *Afro-Ásia*, n. 53 (2016): 50-63.

[75] For broader Portuguese immigration patterns to the US, which totaled less than 1,000 per year, between 1850 and 1870 and stemmed mainly from northern Portugal, see Maria Ioannis Benis Baganha, "International Labor Movements: Portuguese Emigration to the US, 1820-1930" (PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1988), 244-375.

[76] Andres Cassard, *Cincuenta años de la vida de Andres Cassard, escrita por un amigo y hermano, con presencia de documentos auténticos* (New York: G.R. Lockwood, 1875), 216.

[77] T. Ward in memo respecting expulsion of Cunha Reis, 7 July, 1854, FO84/955, TNA.

[78] Cassard, *Cincuenta años*, 216.

[79] Cunha Reis was the African agent for at least some voyages departing New York in 1853. See Crawford to FO, Sept 7, 1853, FO84/906. For more on these individuals, see John O'Sullivan to Lewis Cass, 28 March 1857, SDR, NARA; George Jackson to Lord Clarendon, 28 March 1854, FO 84/932, TNA; Sanchez memo in Edward Archibald to Lord Malmesbury, 3 May 1859, FO84/1086, TNA. For further short biographies of slave traders, especially in West Central Africa, see William Gervase Clarence-Smith, *The third Portuguese empire, 1825–1975: a study in*

Large US ports such as New York were attractive alternative bases for these exiled slave traders. As their experience in Rio and elsewhere had shown, the best places to organize voyages were big ports with strong ties to slaving zones. In these respects, New York was an especially good fit. By midcentury New York was not only America's largest port, but handled more trade than anywhere else in the western hemisphere.[80] Positioned between the expanding American West, to which it was connected by a growing network of canals and railroads, and the Atlantic Ocean, New York was a major global commercial and financial hub. Britain remained the US's main trading partner and chief source of credit, but American ports were connected to slave trading regions in the Caribbean and Africa. By 1840, the US had become Cuba's largest trading partner, surpassing Britain and Spain.[81] New York did more business with the island than any other port, its vessels carrying grain, lumber, and manufactured goods to Cuba and returning with sugar, rum, and molasses for American refineries and consumers. New Orleans was also tightly connected to Cuban markets, laying about a week away by sail and less by steam. Several US ports, mainly in the North, also traded with slave-exporting regions of Africa. A few firms even sent vessels to the Lower Congo River basin, in part to avoid paying tariffs to the Portuguese in Angola.[82]

The arriving traffickers quickly created allies among the overseas merchant community in New York. One of their key associates was a native of the Azores, João Alberto Machado. Machado had immigrated to the US in the late 1840s, and was one of New York's main Africa

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economic imperialism (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), 49–50; Roquinaldo Ferreira, *Dos Sertões ao Atlântico: Tráfico Ilegal de Escravos e Comércio Lícito em Angola, 1830-1860* (Luanda: Kilombelombe, 2012).

[80] On the rise of New York port, see Robert Greenhalgh Albion, *The Rise of New York Port, 1815-1860* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1939). See also, Sven Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850–1896* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 17-45. For a detailed overview of New York during this period, see Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 620-1039.

[81] Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba and the US: ties of singular intimacy, 3rd edition* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2003), 1–28.

[82] John G. Willis to Lewis Cass, Jan. 26, 1859, Despatches from US Consuls in St. Paul de Loanda, 1854-1893, T430, roll 1, NARA.

traders, doing business with several parts of the coast. Although this business was not directly connected to the slave trade, Machado had previously resided in Sierra Leone, where the British believed he had been involved in the traffic to Brazil.[83] Other important allies included Portuguese merchant-officials in the US. When Cunha Reis and Maia Ferreira arrived in New York, they quickly attached themselves to Cesar Figanière the Portuguese Consul General, who ran a merchant house that imported wines from Portugal. In exchange for several thousand dollars, Cunha Reis became a partner in the firm, which subsequently changed its name to Figanière, Reis and Co. As Cunha Reis took the partnership, Ferreira was appointed the firm's secretary.[84] Similarly, Augusto Lopes Baptista, a Brazilian who operated both as a merchant and as the Portuguese vice-consul in Baltimore, became an important ally for traffickers in the early 1850s.[85] At the top of the Portuguese delegation, in Washington D.C., was Cesar Figanière's father, Joaquim Figanière e Morao. He was assisted by another son, Frederico. Foreshadowing some of the work the family would do for slave traders during the 1850s, in 1849 Frederico represented slave traders in Brazil and Angola who brought a libel suit against US officers who had captured an illegal slaver named *Susan* in African waters. The suit failed, but the Figanières' affiliations were clear.[86]

The 'Portuguese' would also forge alliances with merchants who had connections to Cuba. These men were of diverse origins in the Spanish-speaking Atlantic, but were residents of New York, New Orleans, and Charleston during the 1850s. Unlike some of the Portuguese, such as Machado, they were not experienced slave traders; none had obvious connections to the traffic

[83] Benjamin Campbell to FO, Dec. 19, 1854, FO84/950, TNA.
[84] John S. Lumley to Lord Clarendon, Oct 7, 1856, FO84/999, TNA. John O'Sullivan to William Marcy, Aug. 24, 1856, M43: Despatches from US Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906, Roll 16, NARA.
[85] William Marcy to John O'Sullivan, June 21, July 21, 1856, M77: Diplomatic Instructions of the Dept of State, 1801-1906: Roll 134, NARA.
[86] Frederico de la Figanière to John Clayton, Apr. 27, 1849, and May 5, 1849, M57 Notes from the Portuguese Legation in the US to the Dept of State, 1796-1906, Roll T4, Feb 8 1842-Dec 21, 1860, NARA.

before 1850. Instead, they had strong trading interests with Cuba. One important figure, Antonio Maximo Mora, spent his formative years on the island before migrating to the New York in 1853. After establishing himself in Lower Manhattan he became one of the nation's largest importers of Cuban sugar.[87] Another key ally, Albert Horn, was a New York merchant who had been born in Havana.[88] In Charleston, the main figure was, Ramón Salas, a Spaniard, who operated in the Cuba trade with his partner Charles Poujaud.[89] In New Orleans, the most important ally was a native of Mexico named Salvador Prats.[90] These individuals would support the Portuguese, but also work on behalf traffickers in Cuba, especially later in the 1850s.

The importance of mercantile connections was underlined in the development of a Masonic Lodge, *La Fraternidad*, in New York. Although many Americans treated freemasonry with suspicion and even hostility, masonic lodges proliferated in the US and around the Atlantic world during the nineteenth century. Described in a 1859 masonic manual as a "universal language" that promoted "kind and friendly offices" between brothers, freemasonry was an ideal institution for forging connections and engaging in clandestine activity.[91] In New York, lodge no. 387, *La Fraternidad*, was founded by Cuban merchants in 1855.[92] It soon became colonized by immigrant slave traders eager to exploit the secrecy of the lodge, as well as its members' commercial connections with the island. Almost all the Portuguese traffickers became members, including Inocêncio Antonio de Abranches, Francisco Diaz Perez de Almeida, and Manoel Fortunato da

[87] *NYT,* Apr. 26, 1897*; Congressional edition,* vol. 3267, Issue 3, 2642-2646*;* Gloria Pilar Totoricaguena, *The Basques of New York: a cosmopolitan experience* (Reno: University of Nevada, 2011), 68-9.
[88] On Horn, see Howard, *American Slavers*, 189.
[89] Robert Bunch to Lord Russell, July 28, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA.
[90] John Bassett Moore, *History and Digest of the International Arbitrations to Which the US has been a party*, vol. 3 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 2886-2900.
[91] Thomas Smith Webb and Rob Morris eds., *The Freemasons' Monitor* (Cincinnati, OH: Moore, Wilstach, Keys and Co., 1859), 18
[92] The best overview of the lodge is found in various parts of Andres Cassard, *Cincuenta años de la vida de Andres Cassard, escrita por un amigo y hermano, con presencia de documentos auténticos* (New York: G.R. Lockwood, 1875).

Oliveira Botelho (Antonio Botelho's brother). By 1857, these slave traders formed almost half the lodge's membership.[93] They were joined by Justo de San Miguel, a sugar planter born in Santander, who was based in Cuba and implicated in illegal slaving voyages. One of the Portuguese members, Cunha Reis, was the most senior member of the lodge. He had been a freemason since at least the 1840s in Rio de Janeiro and would become the most powerful slave trader in New York.[94]

While traffickers developed important commercial connections in US ports, they also benefitted from broader national political priorities that were crystallizing at midcentury. American concerns with sovereignty remained a serious obstacle to the full suppression of the traffic. Despite continued British pressure on the US to grant the Right of Search, this concession seemed less likely than ever. Tensions were already high between the two powers after the US annexed Texas in 1845 over British objections, and then went to war with Mexico, ultimately taking even more territory from its beleaguered neighbor. The Democratic Party, which was a major force behind these efforts, would maintain control over the US government throughout the 1850s and was especially hostile to Britain.[95] Making matters worse, the proximity of Cuba to the US rendered British interference with US vessels in the Gulf of Mexico even more untenable to all policymakers and the vast majority of Americans. The US position was captured by Andrew Hull Foote, who had commanded the USS *Perry* on the African coast during the 1840s. In his popular 1854 book, *Africa and the American Flag*, Foote noted although he "sympathize[d] with the capture and deliverance of a wretched cargo of African slave from the grasp of a slaver, irrespective of his nationality" it was "contrary to national honor and national interests that the right of capture should be entrusted to the hands of any foreign authority."[96]

[93] Lodge Returns, La Fraternidad, Lodge No.387, Chancellor Robert R. Livingston Masonic Library (CRLML)
[94] Ibid; Cassard, *Cincuenta años*, 208-217; La Fraternidad Minutes, 1855-1858, CRLML.
[95] Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic*, 183-7.
[96] Andrew Hull Foote, *Africa and the American Flag* (New York: NY, D. Appleton & Co., 1854), 300.

While the sovereignty issue would continue to protect US participation in the slave trade, additional cover was offered, indirectly, by American ambitions in Cuba. The island's dramatic economic growth in the early part of the nineteenth century caught the attention of many Americans who eyed incorporating the "Pearl of the Antilles" into the US.[97] For planters (and prospective planters), Cuba held special attractions as a new frontier for American slavery. As a new state, the island would also send representatives to Congress and bolster legislative support for slavery, which was becoming a growing point of tension as Americans spilled into western US territories from both slave states and free. Indeed, many northerners rejected the incorporation of Cuba into the Union precisely because it would strengthen the role of slavery in national affairs. At the same time, other northerners, especially in states such as New Hampshire and Maine, which were already deeply involved in the Cuba trade, eyed the economic benefits of adding the island to the US. If not all Americans viewed the prospect favorably, the majority certainly agreed that in contrast to the energy of the US, Spain – an old, monarchical, and Catholic power – was a corrupting and restraining force on Cuba.[98]

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[97] Among other assessments of expansion, see Adam Rothman, *Slave Country: American Expansion and the Origins of the Deep South* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge: 2005); Alan Taylor, *The Divided Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lake Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991); Aaron Stephen, *How the West Was Lost: The Transformation of Kentucky from Daniel Boone to Henry Clay* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2009); Charles E Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). On Manifest Destiny, see among other assessments, Michael A. Morrison, *Slavery and the American West: The Eclipse of Manifest Destiny and the Coming of the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Sam Haynes and Christopher Morris, eds. *Manifest Destiny and Empire: American Antebellum Expansionism* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997).

[98] For a rejection of incorporation of Cuba into the US on abolitionist grounds, see *Hartford Republican* in *National Era*, Aug. 14, 1851. See Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld: Filibustering in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill, NC: UNC Press, 2002); Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery, Capitalism, and Imperialism in the Mississippi Valley* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2013), 303-329; Jonathan H. Earle, *Jacksonian Antislavery and the Politics of Free Soil, 1824-1854* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

Expansionist impulses were shared and openly expressed at the highest level in the federal government during the late 1840s. Although leading policymakers from Thomas Jefferson to John Quincy Adams had viewed the island as a natural appendage of the US, American agitation over Cuba reached a crescendo during the mid-nineteenth century when the nation entered a decade of Democratic domination both of the presidency and in Congress. Unlike the second major party, the Whigs, whose members were wary of slavery, most Democrats gave it their full-throated support and encouraged its westward and southward expansion. Following the annexation of Texas in 1845, prominent Democratic expansionists turned their attentions to Cuba. Reflecting the increasingly forceful rhetoric, Jefferson Davis, a Democratic senator from Mississippi stated his position bluntly on the Senate floor in 1848: "Cuba must be ours." In the same year, Democratic President James Polk authorized his minister in Madrid, Romulus Sanders, to offer the Spanish government $100 million for the island. The Spanish rejected the offer, but American determination to wrest Cuba from Spain would grow, not wane, during the following decade.[99]

During this period of intense agitation over Cuba, some American expansionists used the issue of the illegal slave trade to support their case for acquiring the island. By 1850, Americans were well aware that the traffic to Cuba, although relatively small compared to Brazil, was ongoing, with newspapers' foreign correspondents and travelers reporting dramatic stories of the latest clandestine landings. Almost all these reports blamed Spain for allowing the trade to endure. The expansionist writer Cora Montgomery, for example, wrote provocatively in her 1850 Cuba book, *The Queen of Islands*, that "[t]he supply [of slaves] is kept up by an energetic importation

[99] Davis quote in James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988). For rising annexationism from the mid-1840s, see Hermino Portell Villa, *Narcisco López y su epoca* (La Habana, 1930); Tom Chaffin, *Fatal Glory: Narcisco López and the First Clandestine US War Against Cuba* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1996). See also, Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld: Filibustering in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill, NC: UNC Press, 2002); May, *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire 1854-1861* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973); Basil Rauch, *American Interest in Cuba: 1848-1855* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948).

from Africa, under the patronage of [the Spanish] Queen Christina, who employs in the slave trade much of the $25,000 a month which she draws from the revenues of Cuba."[100] According to this interpretation, Spain could easily suppress the trade. As the *New York Herald* explained: "it is possible, and even easy, for the government of Spain to stop the slave trade in Cuba, if it were so inclined."[101] The *New York Times* correspondent in Cuba agreed, arguing that the slave trade "will be continued so long as the Spanish flag flies here."[102] The implication of the *Times*' correspondent was that the slave trade could only be stopped by American possession of the island. This argument would be made forcefully later in the decade by many influential policymakers, including a sitting US president. By that point, the idea that Spain was solely responsible for the trade still held sway and was powerfully shaping American approaches to the traffic in its own ports.

Conclusion

The first half of the nineteenth century witnessed a serious assault on the transatlantic slave trade from abolitionists, slaves, political reformers, and eventually, other states. This onslaught resulted in all the major slave trading nations banning the traffic, and some taking additional steps to suppress continued slaving. Despite these measures, many states remained deeply invested in the trade. With their slave economies growing, but not yet at full capacity, Brazil and Cuba, especially, had strong interests in permitting the traffic to continue their shores. Meanwhile, Portugal and Spain, were similarly prepared to abet illegal slaving under their flags and between their colonies. In the US, the situation was different; most Americans opposed the trade by the abolition Act of

[100] Cora Montgomery, *The Queen of Islands and the King of Rivers* (New York: Charles Wood, 1850), 23; The Philadelphia Inquirer agreed that "the agent of the Queen Mother of Spain was and is actually engaged in the infamous traffic." *Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 12, 1850
[101] *New York Herald*, Aug. 22, 1858.
[102] For more on the *NYT*'s position on Cuba, see *NYT*, Nov. 27, 1852.

1808, and certainly by 1820, when Congress declared the traffic piracy. Meanwhile, the internal slave trade supplied southern planters with labor. But although the consensus against the traffic ended slave imports to American shores, the US continued to be involved in the trade through the provision of American ships and the American flag in foreign ports. Like the British, ostensibly the strongest adversary of the trade, the US also supported the traffic indirectly through growing demand for Brazilian coffee and Cuban sugar. As these connections showed, the principles of free trade and sovereignty were formidable barriers to suppression.

During the mid-nineteenth century, the traffic came under renewed attack in many parts of the Atlantic basin. Responding to increasing British pressure and growing internal calls for imperial reform, Portugal attempted to drive the enormous traffic from Angola during the mid and late 1840s. The most consequential assault on the trade came in 1850, when the Brazilian government finally closed the traffic to its shores, under strong pressure from the British navy. Around the same time, the British took even more ruthless action against the traffic in the Gallinas River and in Lagos, effectively ending the trade in much of West Africa. These successes did not, however, herald the end of the traffic. In West Central Africa, slave traders moved their operations north, beyond Portuguese control and effective British interference. In the Lower Congo River basin, especially, they were protected by local rulers, who were willing to play the Portuguese and British against each other, and by topography conducive to slave smuggling. A similar situation prevailed at Ouidah in the Bight of Benin. Meanwhile, in the Americas, Cuban slave imports slumped during the 1840s, but with the island committed to sugar production, and Spain, Britain, and the US, locked in a diplomatic stalemate over the status of the island, the opportunity for a resurgence in the trade remained.

Although it was only partially successful, the midcentury strike against the traffic ruptured the slave trading community, especially in the South Atlantic. While many retired from the trade, a small number of traffickers converged on US ports with the intention of forging a new slaving network between the US, Cuba, and the African coast. Their hub, New York, was an especially attractive base due to its commercial connections with Cuba and Africa. Slave traders soon forged connections with merchants in these trades, including Portuguese consuls and members of *La Fraternidad*. American political priorities also rendered the US a convenient place to operate. By midcentury, the US government was increasingly under the control of Democrats, who were committed to expanding slavery into new territories. This approach created hostilities with Britain and made the chances of a Right of Search agreement even more remote. Moreover, American expansionists were becoming more deeply committed to acquiring Cuba. Part of their developing argument, that Spain was solely responsible for the slave trade and only American occupation could prevent it, would help forestall decisive American action against the trade in the US for most of the 1850s.

Chapter 2

The United States' Role in the Midcentury Slave Trade

In April 1857, the *New York Herald* described a special collection that had recently taken place at one of the City's uptown churches.[1] The paper did not reveal the name or denomination of the church, but noted it was "fashionable" and its congregation was well heeled. Apparently, they were also generous. According to the *Herald*, they had organized a collection to buy a "handsome present" for their minister. There were even rumors they would send him to Europe if there were sufficient funds. That seemed to be a distinct possibility as the plate completed its early rounds. Already, it was carrying a "multitude" of notes.

The warmth of this scene diminished markedly, however, when the plate reached a "comfortable, reverend looking" gentleman named Tom. As the plate approached, Tom reached into his pocket for a fifty-dollar bill, but when it appeared, he realized he was holding a hundred-dollar bill instead. Reluctant to part with this sum, he hesitated awkwardly. Thankfully, a neighbor in his pew leaned in with reassurance. "'Don't worry, Tom,'" he said, "'it's only two black birds, and you'll soon make it up.'" At this point, the *Herald* cut away from the collection and translated for its readers. "The two black birds," it explained, "signifies two negroes." To the *Herald*, the implication was clear: "the liberal and pious member of the church was deeply interested in the slave trade."

The traffic the *Herald* referred to was the illegal transatlantic slave trade. Between 1850 and 1863 this traffic ran principally between US ports, West Central Africa, and Cuba, drawing around a quarter of a million captives into its path.[2] Despite its scale, the 'underground' nature of

[1] *New York Herald*, Apr. 1, 1857.
[2] 'Voyages,' http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/jJtXLuGJ

this trade meant that most Americans knew little about who was running the traffic and how they were doing it. In this context, many newspapers attempted to fill the information gap. Some, including the *Herald*, created their own version of the truth. With its southern sympathies on full display, the *Herald* spun a yarn around domestic slavery politics, claiming that pious northerners who publically distanced themselves from slavery in the South, were privately bankrolling the transatlantic slave trade. It was a clever fiction, but that was all. Like most interested observers, the *Herald* was locked out of the slave traders' world. Only a few insiders understood how the trade operated and what the US role actually entailed.

Historians have addressed these questions with more accuracy than contemporary newspapers. Leonardo Marques has offered the most thorough analysis to date in two chapters of his 2016 book, *The United States and the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the Americas*. Drawing on scraps of information from slave trade suppression archives in London, Lisbon, and Rio de Janeiro, Marques contends that the main US roles were the use of American-built ships and the US flag in the trade. He also contends that a small cadre of emigrant traffickers from Brazil, West Central Africa, and Portugal controlled the US side of the traffic from New York. Marques offers less detail on the financial side of the trade, but suggests that these merchants funded at least some voyages departing from US ports.[3]

[3] Leonardo Marques, *The United States*, 185-218. See also, Leonardo Marques, "US Shipbuilding, Atlantic Markets, and the Structures of the Contraband Slave Trade," in *The Rise and Demise of Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Atlantic World*, eds., Philip Misevich and Kristin Mann (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2016), 196-219. Other contributions include David Eltis, *Economic Growth & The Ending of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), especially 157-8; Eltis, "The US Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1644–1867: An Assessment" *Civil War History*, 54 (2008): 371-377; Don Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic: An Account of the US Government's Relations to Slavery* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 135-204; Eric Anderson, "Yankee Blackbirds: Northern Entrepreneurs and the Illegal International Slave Trade, 1808-1865," (MA thesis, University of Idaho, 2000); Obedele-Starks, *Freebooters and Smugglers: The Foreign Slave Trade in the US after 1808* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2007); Gerald Horne, *The Deepest South: The US, Brazil, and the African Slave Trade* (New York: New York University Press, 2007); Peter Andreas, *Smuggler Nation: How Illicit Trade Made America* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 130-153; W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the US of America, 1638-1870* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1896), 168-193; Warren Howard, *American Slavers and the Federal Law, 1837-1862* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press:

The following chapter uses three groups of sources to revise these conclusions. The first is slave trading merchants' correspondence and accounting documents. British and Brazilian slave trade suppression fleets found most of these papers aboard captured slavers, although the Portuguese authorities found some in the home of a notorious slave trader, João Soares, in Novo Redondo, Angola. There are twenty-nine letters in all, as well as accounting documents for fifteen voyages.[4] The second group is slave trade reports by spies who worked for the British and American governments. The British informant was Emilio Sanchez, a Cuban-born merchant who lived in New York City. Sanchez spied for the British government between 1859 and 1862 and wrote over 180 letters to Edward Archibald, Britain's consul in New York.[5] The American spy, who is unnamed in the sources, divulged slave trade secrets to John O'Sullivan, the American Minister to Portugal. This informant divided his time between New York and Lisbon and was familiar with the lusophone traffickers in Manhattan.[6] The final group of records is slave trade reports from Spanish diplomats in Washington, D.C. and Havana.[7]

These sources indicate that the US had three major roles in the midcentury trade. Each will be addressed in a subsection of this chapter. The first was, as Marques suggests, shipping. In

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1963). For the very small illegal traffic to the American South (just two voyages after 1850), see Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery, Capitalism, and Imperialism in the Mississippi Valley* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 395-422; Sylviane A. Diouf, *Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The Slave Ship Clotilda and the Story of the Last Africans brought to America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). Du Bois, Horne, and Obedele-Starks argue for extensive capital emanating from the US, but their supporting evidence is very limited. See Du Bois, *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade*, 178-9; Gerald Horne, *The Deepest South*, 136-7; Obedele-Starks, *Freebooters and Smugglers,* 168.

[4] These records are found in FO84/995, FO84/910, FO84/932, FO84/1235, ADM 123/184, and at The National Archives, Kew, UK (hereafter TNA); M43: Dispatches from US Ministers to Portugal, 1790-1906, Roll 16, Jan 31, 1856-July 28, 1856, State Department Records, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D.C. (hereafter M43, SDR, NARA); *New York Times*, June 25, 1856.

[5] For the Sanchez correspondence see FO84/1086, FO84/1111, FO84/1138, TNA. He work is analyzed in detail in chapter 4.

[6] For the Lisbon spy see M43, Roll 17, SDR, NARA.

[7] Especially, Legajo 451/7891, Embajada de España en Washington, Archivo general de la administración, Alcalá de Henares, Spain (hereafter AGA); Legajos 3549 & 4686, Ultramar, Archivo Histórico Nacional (hereafter AHN); FO84/1197, TNA.

contrast to his view, however, I contend that shipping was not merely the domain of lusophones in New York, but also of hispaniphones in several US ports, who held strong ties with Cuba. The second role was voyage financing. Slave trading merchants based in the US were major investors in slaving voyages. Typically, they co-financed voyages with their counterparts in Cuba and West Central Africa. By joining forces in this way, traffickers limited the substantial risks of illegal slaving and increased the chances of handsome returns for all parties. The third role was laundering capital bound up in slaving voyages. Like financing, this role was not limited to the US, but the booming port of New York City and its burgeoning financial services industry specialized in it.

There are several reasons why recovering this history is important. First is the intervention in slave trade historiography, which has tended to misunderstand and limit the role of the US in the traffic. Second, understanding this role expands conceptions of the republic's engagement with slavery beyond its boundaries.[8] Specifically, this chapter identifies how the US was intimately tied to African and Cuban slavery in the nineteenth century. It made an especially important contribution to the rapidly growing slave society of Cuba.[9] Finally, because the nature of the trade forced US-based traffickers to work with allies in Africa and Cuba, a close study exposes vast proslavery networks that underpinned the slaving Atlantic. Ultimately, the shape and nature of these networks help explain the resiliency of the traffic in the face of stiff suppressionist pressure in the mid-nineteenth century.

Before attempting this *exposé*, it is important to define what I mean by the "US role" in the

[8] The historiography on slavery with US borders is exhaustive. Some useful recent contributions are Edward E Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and The Making of American Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2014); Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery, Capitalism, and Imperialism in the Mississippi Valley* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2013).

[9] For Cuba's transition from a society with slaves to a slave society see Franklin Knight, *Slave Society in Cuba during the Nineteenth Century* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970); Manuel Moreno Fraginals, *El Ingenio: Complejo economico-social Cubano del azucar*, vols. 1-3 (2nd edition, La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1978). For the early stages of that transition and the influence of the Haiti Revolution, see Ada Ferrer, *Freedom's Mirror: Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

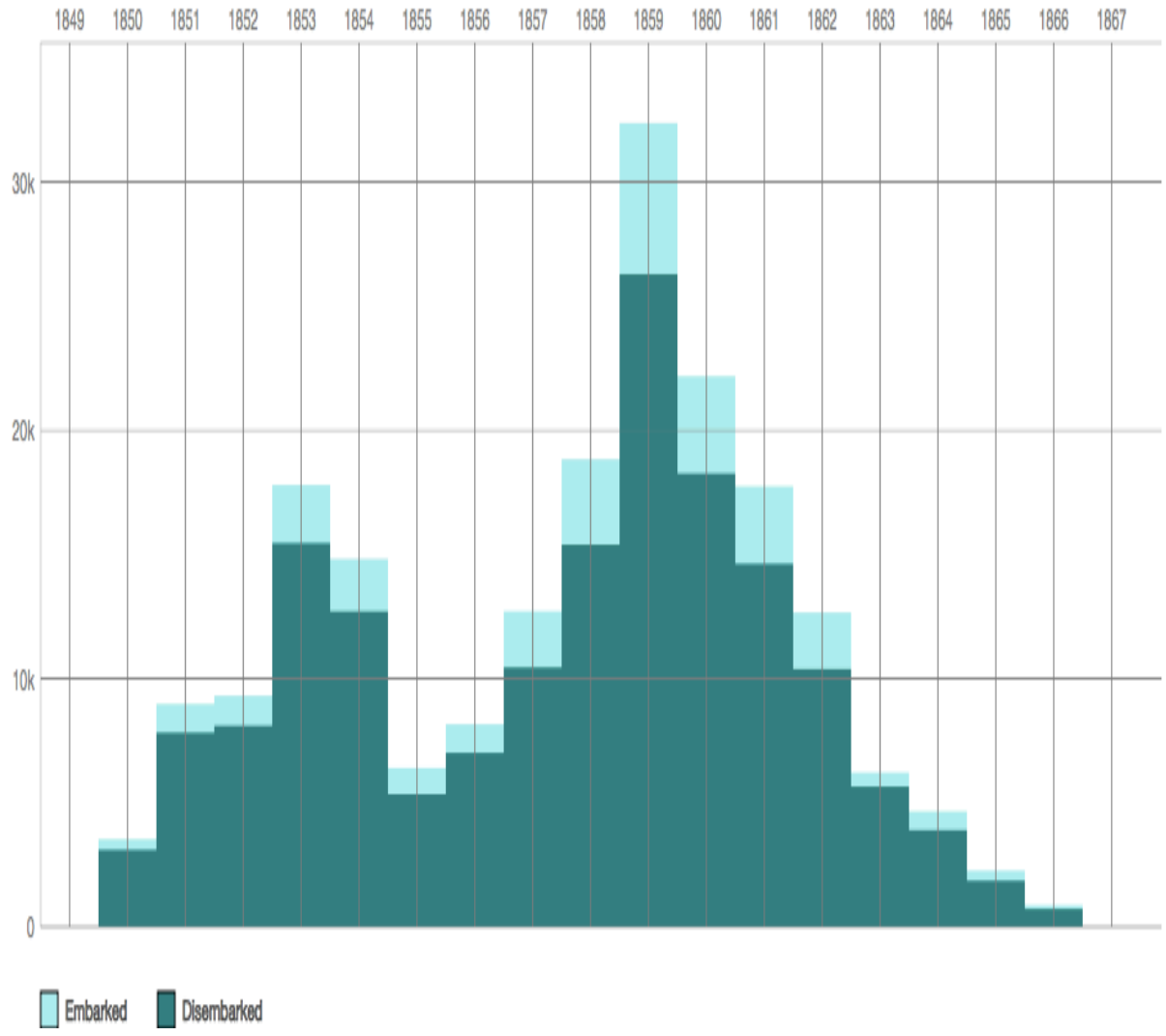
slave trade. Voyages involving US citizens, US ships, or US ports are a few potential definitions, but as this chapter will show, they would be too narrow and would not produce a well-rounded history of US participation in the traffic. My definition is more expansive. It includes any place, person, or property that came under US jurisdiction on land or at sea. That includes: US ports, natives and foreign aliens living in those ports, and vessels and capital flowing through the US proper. Having established those broad parameters, the chapter now turns to the centrality of US shipping in the midcentury trade.

US shipping and the slave trade after 1850

In 1860, Gabriel García Tassara, the Spanish Ambassador in Washington D.C., compiled a report on US involvement in the slave trade. As Figure 2.1 shows, there had been a sharp uptick in smuggling to Cuban shores during the past decade. In fact, more captives had arrived on the island during the previous year than any other year in Cuban history. Aware that the US was playing some role in this growing traffic, Tassara's bosses in Madrid had demanded a summary report from the front lines. Several months later, after soliciting his own reports from his vice consuls in US ports, Tassara offered his conclusions. In his view, the US role centered on shipping. His evidence clearly showed that American-built vessels were dominating the traffic. He also noted that the trade was being "done almost exclusively under the [US] flag."[10] Finally, he argued US ports had become major departure points for slavers. He identified one particular hotspot: "New York" he wrote, "is generally the port where the ships leave for the trade."[11]

[10] See notebook in Legajo 451/7891, AGA.
[11] Ibid. In 1860, for instance, the London *Times* called New York the "greatest slave trading mart in the world." Quoted in Gene Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2009), 90.

Figure 2.1: *Number of Captives Embarked and Disembarked in Cuba, 1850-1867*



One way to test Tassara's conclusions is by measuring them against information stored in *Voyages*. The researchers behind *Voyages* have compiled data for approximately 36,000 slaving voyages during the trade's three and a half century lifespan. For the period after 1836, when the slave trade was illegal throughout the Atlantic world, they lean heavily on diplomatic and naval

suppression records in state archives.[12] Given that traffickers ran the trade underground, one might suspect that suppression records would be incomplete, leading *Voyages* to underestimate and misrepresent the trade. But the authors of *Voyages* are bullish on their data. They contend they have identified 97 percent of all voyages bound for Cuba and Puerto Rico after 1830.[13] This coverage exceeds rates for most other, predominantly legal, branches of the slave trade.[14] Accepting their claims, it follows that around 359 voyages took place between 1851 and 1866.[15]

Voyages' information on the post 1850 trade suggests that Tassara's analysis was roughly accurate. His claim that American vessels were dominating the trade was certainly true. *Voyages* shows that between 1851 and 1866, 88 percent of all voyages took place aboard vessels constructed in US shipyards.[16] As Table 2.1 shows, Baltimore was by far the most prolific builder of vessels that entered the slave trade. Yards from Maine down to New York lagged far behind, although collectively their production was about the same as Baltimore. Shipyards south of Maryland were not prolific builders of slavers. Despite their deep involvement in the domestic slave trade during this era, Richmond, Norfolk, and Mobile produced only a handful of vessels that ended up in the transatlantic trade.[17]

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[12] *Voyages* draws on extensive Spanish, Cuban, British, and African sources for the post 1821 slave trade to the Spanish Americas. See David Eltis and David Richardson, "A New Assessment of the Transatlantic Slave Trade," in *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*, eds., Eltis and David Richardson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 36-7.
[13] *Ibid*, 37.
[14] Overall, the *Voyages*' authors believe they have identified 93 percent of all slaving voyages in British vessels, 94 percent for French and Spanish, and 80 percent for vessels under US colors or sailing from the American colonies before independence. Ibid, Tables 4 & 5, 32-3, 38.
[15] 'Voyages,' http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/pq1bj2I5. VOYAGES lists 348 non-Brazilian voyages. This figure is 97 percent of a total of 359 voyages.
[16] 'Voyages,' http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/IxJ3Nb5r.
[17] For this trade see Michael Tadman, *Speculators and Slaves: Masters, Traders, and Slaves in the Old South* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989); Calvin Schermerhorn, *The business of slavery and the rise of American capitalism, 1815-1860* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015).

Table 2.1*: Number of voyages in US-built vessels, 1851-1866*

Place of Construction	Number of Vessels	Place of Construction	Number of Vessels
Baltimore, MD	95	Cherryfield, ME	3
New York, NY	21	Damariscotta, ME	3
Philadelphia, PA	12	Dorchester, MD	3
Bristol, RI	9	Florida, Unspecified	3
Brookhaven, NY	9	Freeport, ME	3
Newbury, NH	9	Kennebunk, ME	3
Prospect, ME	9	Massachusetts, Unspecified	3
Robbinston, ME	9	Medford, MA	3
Sheepscutt River, ME	9	Milwell, NJ	3
USA unspecified	9	Mobile, AL	3
Bath, ME	6	New Orleans, LA	3
Cohasset, MA	6	Newcastle, DE	3
Kingston, MA	6	Norfolk, VA	3
Pembroke, ME	6	Plymouth, MA	3
Providence, RI	6	Port Jefferson, NY	3
Rockland, ME	6	Portsmouth, NH	3
Thomaston, ME	6	Richmond, VA	3
Waldoboro, ME	6	Saco, ME	3
Amesbury, MA	3	Sag Harbor, NY	3
Brewer, ME	3	Seaport, ME	3
Calais, ME	3	South Carolina, Unspecified	3
Camden, ME	3	Wells, ME	3
			Total: 317

Note: *Voyages* does not give complete information on all 359 voyages that took place between 1851 and 1866. This table is based on a sample of 123 voyages for which place of construction is available from *Voyages* and *American Lloyds' Registry* (1859). To arrive at my estimates, I have taken the raw number from these sources and factored it into the 88 percent of voyages that took place on US-built ships (315). The discrepancy between the table's total (317) and 315, is due to rounding.

Sources: http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/iGgUpubx; *American Lloyds' Registry of American and Foreign Shipping* (New York, NY: E. & G.W. Blunt, 1859)

Tassara's second claim was that the trade was carried out almost entirely under the American flag. *Voyages* suggests that although this was not quite true, the US flag was clearly dominant. Between 1851 and 1866, 70 percent of all voyages sailed under US colors. The Spanish flag accounted for eighteen percent; the Brazilian four percent; and the French and a few other

flags, a few percent each.[18] Tassara's statement is more accurate if we consider the moment in which he was writing. As Table 2.2 indicates, the use of the American flag increased dramatically in the early to mid-1850s. In 1860, when Tassara reported his findings, 83 percent of all illegal slave ships were flying under US colors.[19] The use of the American flag would only drop after the Lyon-Seward Treaty in 1862, which permitted Britain to capture US-flagged slavers.

Table 2.2: *Percentage of voyages sailing under the US flag, 1851-1866*

Year Range	Percentage of slavers flying US flag
1851-1854	37
1855-1858	78
1859-1862	76
1863-1866	38

Note: Estimates are based on voyages for which flag designation is known (217 of all 359 voyages, 1851-1866). Source: http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/Mg78FoNM

Tassara was also correct in noting that US ports, especially New York City, were important departure ports for slavers. As Table 2.3 shows, slavers' departure points were widely dispersed throughout the Atlantic basin, but most left from US and Cuban ports. Overall, Cuba accounted for 42 percent of all departures during this period, while the US accounted for 34 percent. Looking more granularly, we see that although ships departed from several ports in these jurisdictions, there were concentrations. In the US case, slavers embarked from ports throughout the eastern seaboard as well as in the Gulf of Mexico, but New York accounted for 78 of all 121 US departures (about 2 in every 3). A similar pattern is discernable in Cuba. Slavers departed from all over the island's

[18] Mexico, Argentina, France, Norway, Norway, and Sardinia. VOYAGES: http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/Mg78FoNM (consulted June 16, 2016)
[19] *Voyages*: http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/1rfhkYq4 consulted June 16, 2016)

long northern and southern coasts, but Havana was clearly dominant. The Cuban capital was the single most important point of departure during this era.

Table 2.3: *Number of voyage departures by port, 1851-1866*

Port	**No. of departures**	**Port**	**Number of departures**
Havana	96	Bahia	8
New York	78	Lisbon	7
New Orleans	26	Charleston	5
Rio de Janeiro	26	New Bedford	4
Cuba, port unspecified	21	Boston	3
Cadiz, Spain	18	Baltimore	3
Matanzas, Cuba	14	Mobile	1
Cardenas, Cuba	14	Savannah	1
Barcelona, Spain	8		

Note on calculating estimates: *Voyages* offers the departure port for 278 voyages. The *Voyages* figure for each port is divided by 278 and multiplied by 359 (the approximate number of voyages that took place 1851-1866) to arrive at the estimate for each port. Non-US ports that sent fewer than 5 vessels into the trade have not been included in this table. Departures from these ports, along with rounding, accounts for the discrepancy between the tabular total of 333 and 359. For more information see: http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/zgqD3Eli

The immigrant merchants from the Portuguese and Spanish-speaking Atlantic basin were largely responsible for harnessing US shipping to the slave trade. The 'Portuguese,' who had long experience in the traffic, had come to New York with this aim in mind. From their new base in the shipping district of Lower Manhattan, shown in Figure 2.2, they purchased vessels and organized voyages. They did much of this work in association with their partners in West Central Africa. In

1855, for example, Guilherme José da Silva Correia, a Brazilian trafficker on Congo River wrote to the Portuguese, João José Vianna, in New York, instructing him to "purchase a patacho or pilot-boat to carry 400 packages [captives]." Correia went on to remind Vianna about the essential details. The ship "must be a fast vessel," he wrote, and "come under the American flag."[20] Correia also suggested Vianna consider purchasing the vessel in Baltimore, where he believed it could be found more cheaply than New York. The 'Spanish' merchants, including Antonio Mora, who were deeply involved in the sugar trade with Cuba and had not come to the US to secure vessels for the trade, purchased few vessels at the beginning of the decade, but would become major players in the trade later in the 1850s.

Figure 2.2. *New York City's Illegal Slaving District, 1850-1863. From John Bachman's* Birds Eye View of New York and Environs*, c.1865*

[20] Guilherme Jose da Silva Correa to João José Vianna, Apr. 21, 1855, enc. in John Morgan to Lord Clarendon, 13 June 1856 in *Accounts and Papers of the House of Commons* vol. 44 (London: Harrison and Sons, 1857), 132. Many of the fast slave ships used in midcentury illegal slave trade are found in William Crothers' book on US shipping: *The American-built clipper ship, 1850-1856* (Camden, ME: Intl Marine Pub Co., 1996). See also Marques, "US Shipbuilding," 201.

These merchants were stealthy in their acquisition of the American vessels and the US flag. Their main problem was that very few were naturalized US citizens and so their vessels were not entitled to fly US colors. To overcome this difficulty, they paid American merchants, shipbrokers, and ship captains to purchase vessels on their behalf, just as slave traders in Brazil, such as Manoel Fonseca, had done through merchant James Birckhead and captain Joshua Clapp during the 1840s. This strategy not only gave their vessels protection from British interference at sea, it also kept their names off the bill of sale and the ship's registry. In large ports, such as New York, which contained hundreds of merchants, shipbrokers, and captains, handling the port's massive trade, straw buyers were not hard to find. In 1854, one of the Portuguese in New York, who went by the name Vilela, was paying American citizens only $25 to register slavers under their names.[21] According to a first mate, Henry Wills, Vilela claimed "he could go to the US Hotel [in Manhattan] and any captain there with whom he was acquainted would do it for him with pleasure." By the late 1850s, some intermediaries were making numerous straw purchases for their slave trading friends in New York. Ship captain Jonathon Dobson, for instance, purchased the *Panchita* and *Isla de Cuba*, for the notorious Portuguese trafficker Cunha Reis in 1858. The following year, a New York merchant, Harrison S. Vining, purchased the *Orion* for another Portuguese, Joaquim Miranda.[22] By the early 1860s, these maneuvers were becoming notorious, prompting the former US African Squadron officer, Robert Schudfelt, to claim that false ownership of US vessels was giving "immunity … to the combined rascality of Christendom."[23]

Traffickers in New York and other US ports were also adept at outwitting local authorities.

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[21] *NYT*, Dec. 2, 1854

[22] Sanchez to Archibald enc. in Archibald to Lord Malmesbury, Apr. 5, 1859, & Archibald to Malmesbury, July 25, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA. Looking back on the activities of these individuals in 1863, Consul Archibald ruefully acknowledged to his superiors in London, "in the purchase of suitable vessels, the [slave traders] had here a wide field." Archibald to Foreign Office, Dec. 31, 1863, FO84/1197, TNA.

[23] Robert Schufeldt to Truman Smith in Frederick C. Drake, "Secret History of the Slave Trade to Cuba Written By an American Naval Officer, Robert Wilson Schufeldt, 1861," *The Journal of Negro History* 55 (1970): 229.

The federal government tasked federal marshals and the custom houses attached to each port with eradicating the slave trade from their jurisdictions. Traffickers' practice of recruiting intermediaries from maritime professions to purchase slavers made their job more difficult. Since merchants and ship captains commonly bought and sold vessels, it was not particularly obvious when a vessel was being transferred into the slave trade. When it was time to clear the vessel from port, traffickers simply had these same individuals fill out the necessary paperwork at the custom house in their stead. Slave traders were also careful in selecting their clearance destinations. Knowing New York had a small legal trade with several points on the African coast, they often had their intermediaries openly make clearances for African ports.[24] On other occasions, they had them give false destinations, throwing custom house clerks off the scent.[25]

While some officials were outfoxed by slave traders, others were corrupt. The American spy in Lisbon noted, "[b]ribery is largely employed and is relied upon as a sure and successful mode of getting the vessels off [from US ports]."[26] He pointed to the example of the slaver *Altivie*, which departed New York in 1856.[27] Apparently, "an officer jumped aboard" the vessel just as it was about to depart down the East River. Instead of arraigning the ship and arresting its crew, however, the marshal went below deck. There, "wine [was] produced, [and] five hundred dollars laid on the table in gold." Faced with lining his pockets or being carried away, the marshal allegedly "took the money." The case of the slaver *Storm King* proved these tales were not mere slander. In 1860, US Commissioner Joseph Bridgham fired New York marshals Theodore Rynders

[24] The slaver *Cora*, for instance, cleared and sailed for Luanda, Angola in 1860. Sanchez to Archibald, enc. in Archibald to Foreign Office, July 6, 1860, FO84/1111, TNA. VOYAGES #4655. For more on the cover of the Africa trade, see Archibald to Foreign Office, Dec 31, 1863, FO84/1197, TNA.
[25] The *Isla de Cuba*, for instance, cleared New York for the Azores, but instead went to the African coast. Sanchez to Archibald enc. in Archibald to Lord Malmesbury, Mar. 29, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA. VOYAGES does not attribute an 1859 voyage to this vessel, though it may accounted for in one of the many voyages for which VOYAGES it does not offer a name.
[26] John O'Sullivan to William Marcy, 24 August 1856 and 28 March 1857, SDR, NARA.
[27] *Voyages* #42930.

and Henry Munn after learning they had boarded the suspicious *Storm King*, only to retire and let it slip out to sea. Bridgham made his decision having learned that the pair had received assurances from the men onboard that they would receive $1,500 in the City the following day.[28]

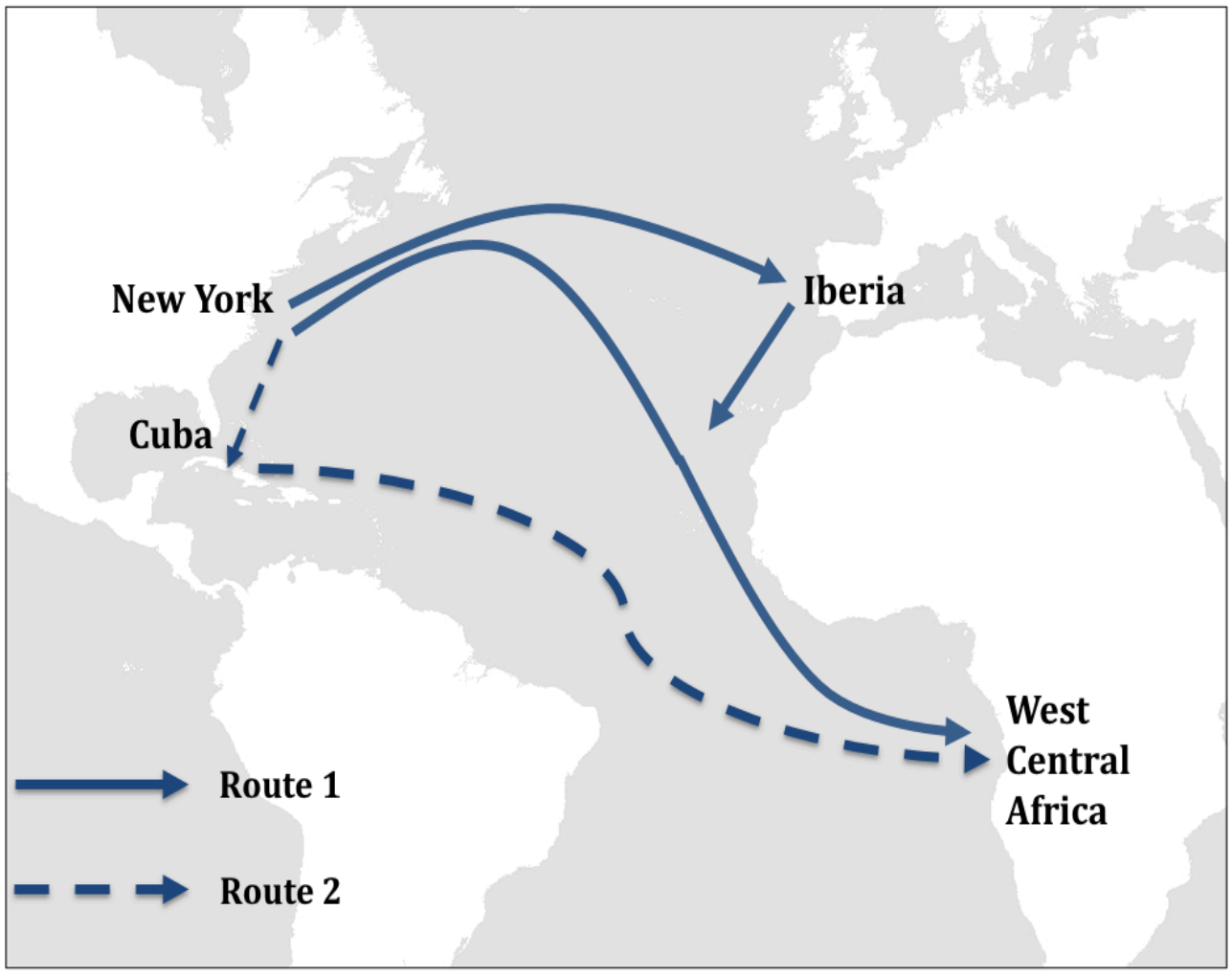
When slave ships got out of US ports, they started on one of the two main routes shown in Figure 2.3. The first route began in a general easterly direction, following the North Atlantic's clockwise winds and currents. It then dropped down to the African coast using the Canaries and Guinea Currents. Some vessels following this path sailed directly to Africa from US ports.[29] The *Mary E. Smith*, for example, journeyed straight from Boston to the Congo River where it received 520 captives.[30] Others stopped in the Iberian Peninsula, the Azores, the Cape Verde Islands, or São Tomé, for extra men, supplies, or repairs, or for information on shipments of captives and the locations of cruisers. The New York ship *Haidee*, for instance, visited Cadiz to repair a yard-arm before continuing its journey to the Loango Coast in 1858.[31] The brig *North Hand*, by contrast, left New York, paused at the Cape Verde Islands, and sailed onward to Snake's Head, near the Congo River.[32] Depending on the stops, these outbound voyages took from three weeks to three months.

Lusophone traffickers in New York dispatched almost every vessel following this route. They were able to dominate this path thanks to their strong ties with Portugal, and especially, the main slave embarkation zone, West Central Africa. José Lucas Henriques da Costa, for example, had lived in southern Angola before his departure for the U.S and kept up a correspondence with

[28] *NYT*, May 7, 1860. Sanchez also noted "US officials connived at" the slave trade. Sanchez to Archibald, enc. in Archibald to Foreign Office, Dec. 24, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA. Archibald came to the same conclusion, see Archibald to Foreign Office, Dec. 31, 1863, FO84/1197, TNA.
[29] *NYT,* June 28, 1856.
[30] W. Stafford Jerningham to Lord Clarendon, June 13, 1856 & John Morgan to Clarendon, Aug. 11, 1856, FO84/995, TNA.
[31] Sanchez to Archibald, enc. in Archibald to Lord Malmesbury, Mar. 8, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA
[32] *NYT*, Sept. 13, 1857.

his associates in Africa after his arrival in New York. In May 1856, he wrote to Bento Pacheco dos Santos, a slaver trader at Novo Redondo, about the voyage of the American slaver the *Pierre Soulé*.[33] The previous year, Vianna had drawn on similar ties with Correia to arrange the purchase of "fast" American vessel for the Congo River. Through these connections, lusophone traffickers on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean were able to organize voyages together.

Figure 2.3. *Routes Taken by Slavers Departing US Ports, 1851-1863*



[33] Lucas to Bento Pacheco dos Santos, May 20, 1856 enc. in O'Sullivan to State Department, 28 July 1856 and 28 March 1857, SDR, NARA.

The second route taken by slavers departing US ports began not with a big swing to the east, but with a short run south to Cuba. Most vessels following this path went to Havana. One of these vessels was the brig *Echo*, which arrived in Havana from New Orleans in 1858.[34] Other vessels arrived in Matanzas, Cardenas, and other minor ports on Cuba's long coasts. The *Antelope*, for instance, cleared New York for San Juan de los Remedios, in north-central Cuba, in 1859.[35] Depending on the ports involved, the journey to Cuba could take five days or up to two weeks. When they arrived, these vessels were manned and fitted out for their transatlantic voyages. Then, they were dispatched to Africa, following a southeasterly path to their destination (see Figure 2.3).[36] This route was described by Assistant Treasurer of the US, John J. Cisco, to the Secretary of the Interior, Caleb Smith, in June, 1861. "It is a well known fact," Cisco wrote, "that many vessels are first sent [to Cuba] from our northern cities; and then transferred to other parties, and dispatched to the coast; the preliminary arrangements being made here."[37]

Spanish-speaking merchants in US ports dominated this route. The key was their commercial and familial ties with Cuba. According to Cisco, among the merchant houses engaged in the trade in Cuba, "many of them have branches and others, correspondents here."[38] The two Mora brothers, Antonio and José, are one example of these connections. By the late 1850s, Antonio was running the Cuban end of their sugar business in Havana, while José looked after their affairs in New York. In 1859 they arranged the delivery of three vessels, the *Panfilia*, the *JJ Cobb*, and

[34] Archibald to Russell, Oct. 10, 1859, FO84/1086.
[35] *Ibid*.
[36] In 1858, English-born sailor William Petterson described boarding the slaver *Rufus Soule* at Matanzas, Cuba and "beating down" the African coast to the Congo. Testimony enc. in Totten to Conover, Dec. 10, 1858, FO84/1085.
[37] John J. Cisco to Caleb Smith, June 5, 1861, Misc. Letters Relating to the Suppression of the Slave Trade, Dec. 30, 1858-Feb 3, 1871, *Records Of The Office Of The Secretary Of The Interior Relating to the Suppression Of The African Slave Trade And Negro Colonization, 1854-72*, Publication M-160, NARA.
[38] John J. Cisco to Caleb Smith, June 5, 1861, Misc. Letters Relating to the Suppression of the Slave Trade, Dec. 30, 1858-Feb 3, 1871, *Records Of The Office Of The Secretary Of The Interior Relating to the Suppression Of The African Slave Trade And Negro Colonization, 1854-72*, Publication M-160, NARA.

the *City of Norfolk*, to the notorious slave-trading firm Ximenes, Martínez, and Lafitte in Havana.[39] Another prominent dealer in slavers in New York, Albert Horn, had been born in Cuba, where his brother, William, retained residency.[40] In other cases, perhaps where the Cuba-US bond was not quite so strong, Cuban slave traders travelled to American ports to ascertain vessels' suitability for the slave trade. Again, commercial ties were important. In 1859, the British spy in New York, Emilio Sanchez reported that "parties from Havana" had arrived to inspect the *Antelope*.[41] After approving the vessel, they called upon Antonio Ros to facilitate the purchase. According to Sanchez, Ros was a "late a clerk with J[uan] M. Ceballos[,] one of the largest regents of Cuban [merchant] houses."[42]

By the late 1850s, the lusophones and hispaniphones in US ports no longer controlled their respective routes so completely. The lusophones in New York had gradually broken into the business of supplying slavers to the island. In 1861, Robert Schudfeldt noted that the Azorean, João Alberto Machado, was helping to send slavers to Havana from his office at 75 Beaver Street in Manhattan.[43] In 1859, Sanchez reported that the Portuguese, Antonio Augusto Botelho, was making frequent trips to Havana, and that some of the voyages leaving New York were now doing so partly at the behest of Cuban traffickers.[44] In Baltimore, another Portuguese, Issac Oliver, whom

[39] Mora and Navarro had the same captain - John Peterson - deliver the *Panfilia* and *JJ Cobb* to Havana. For more on these vessels see, *House Executive Documents*, 36th Congress (Washington D.C., 1861), 373-4 (hereafter *HED*). *Antelope* (#4389), *JJ Cobb* (#4304), *Panfilia* (#4809).
[40] Albert Horn.doc
[41] Sanchez to Archibald enclosed in Mar. 8, 1859 Archibald to Malmesbury, FO84/1086, TNA.
[42] Ros also played this role for the same visiting slave traders in the purchase of the *Orion* (#4807), the *Emily* (#4908) and the *Josephine* (unidentified in VOYAGES). For these cases, see Sanchez to Archibald enc. in Archibald to Malmesbury, Mar. 8, 1859 & Dec 24, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA. Sanchez actually discussed these dealings with Ros, who was apparently unaware that Sanchez was a spy. Archibald to FO, July 6, 1860, FO84/1111, TNA. Spanish-speaking merchants in other US ports were doing work similar to Ros on behalf of Cuban traffickers. On Prats and Pujols, see Archibald to FO, Dec. 21, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA. For Poujand and Salas see Consul Bunch to Russell, July 28, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA. See also Sanchez to Archibald in Archibald to FO, Jan. 20, 1860, FO84/1111, TNA.
[43] Robert Schufeldt to Truman Smith in Frederick C. Drake, "Secret History of the Slave Trade to Cuba Written By an American Naval Officer, Robert Wilson Schufeldt, 1861," *The Journal of Negro History* 55 (1970): 221.
[44] Sanchez to Archbald, enc. in Archibald to Lord Malmesbury, Mar. 8 1859, FO84/1086, TNA.

Solomon Beale, an American spy for the Department of the Interior, described as "smartly dressed, like lawyer or clergyman" and having a "reputation of being very sharp, shrewd, and keen[,]" bought vessels for slave traders in Matanzas.[45] These new ties did not displace the Cuban-US Hispanic connection, but their emergence implies a merging of Cuban and New York lusophone interests as the trade wore on, a topic that will be explored more fully in the following section on voyage financing.

Financing the Midcentury Slave Trade

Investing in illegal slaving voyages was potentially lucrative, but it was also risky. On the one hand, rising world sugar prices boosted slave prices in Cuba and created unprecedented profit rates for investors.[46] For the period between 1856 and 1867, David Eltis estimates average profit rates of 91 percent, far beyond the 10 percent common in the eighteenth-century trade.[47] On the other hand, investors faced high risks. In addition to the traditional risks from shipboard revolt, shipwreck, and rampant disease, illegal voyages were in danger of capture by naval patrols. Interception was a serious concern. After 1850, international patrols in African and Cuban waters captured around 40 per cent of all transatlantic slavers.[48] Voyages that beat those odds faced further risks and costs once they reached their destination. Many Cuban officials demanded large bribes in exchange for safe disembarkations, and a few colonial administrations, such as that of Captain General Juan de la Pezuela (1853–54), were quite effective at 'confiscating' newly arrived

[45] Solomon Beale to Caleb B Smith, Nov. 7, 28, Dec. 11, 1862, Misc. Letters Relating to the Suppression of the Slave Trade, Dec. 30, 1858-Feb 3, 1871, *Records Of The Office Of The Secretary Of The Interior Relating to the Suppression Of The African Slave Trade And Negro Colonization, 1854-72*, Publication M-160, NARA.
[46] For Cuban prices, see Laird W. Bergad, Fe Iglesias García, and María del Carmen Barcia, *The Cuban slave market: 1790–1880* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 47–52. For slave prices on African coasts, see Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 264, tables C.3 and C.4.
[47] Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 161, table 10, and 269–82.
[48] *Ibid*., 97–101.

captives.[49]

The Lusophones in New York were willing to finance voyages despite these risks.[50] Although they had come to the US in part to exploit its shipping markets, their larger goal was to invest in voyages and make handsome returns. Their basic strategy was to purchase vessels in US ports and dispatch them to their correspondents in West Central Africa. Their allies would then force the captives aboard and send the slaver on to Cuba. The key merit of this plan was that it combined strengths: the New Yorkers' access to fast, US-flagged ships, and the West Central Africans' expertize in supplying captives for incoming slavers.[51]

The major problem was insecurity on the Cuban end. In general, the Lusophones in New York had only weak ties with the island's planters, merchants, and officials, who controlled the slave disembarkation zones. The tenuousness of their position had been demonstrated in the early 1850s, when several of the New Yorkers had attempted to establish themselves in Cuba, but were thrown out by Pezuela's administration. The problem would persist. In 1855, Pezuela's successor, José Concha, who was more friendly to the traffic, nonetheless issued further expulsion orders to his district governors and chiefs of police.[52] Although Cunha Reis did move to the island in 1858,

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[49] For bribes, see Francisco Serrano to Ministro de la Guerra y Ultramar, 6 September 1861, Legajo 3549/3, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid, Ultramar, AHN. On Pezuela's unusually robust administration, see María de los Ángeles Meriño Fuentes and Aisnara Perera Díaz, *Contrabando de bozales en Cuba: perseguir el tráfico y mantener la esclavitud, 1845–1866* (Mayabeque, Cuba: Ediciones Montecallado, 2015), 104–10; Arthur Corwin, *Spain and the Abolition of Slavery, 1817-1886* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1967), 114-23.

[50] Historians have identified pieces of the post-1850 slave trade financing puzzle, but none have put them together to show the overall picture. Relying mostly on British suppression sources, David Eltis' classic 1987 work identified Cuba as 'the source of capital.' During research for his PhD thesis and subsequent 2012 book, Roquinaldo Ferreira found that traffickers in West Central Africa and New York invested in the trade. In his 2013 dissertation Leonardo Marques added a little more detail to financing in New York. Also in 2013, Martín Rodrigo discovered traces of Spanish capital, especially from Catalonia, in the trade. See Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 164-204 (quote 158); Marques, *The United States*, 203-5; Roquinaldo Ferreira, *Dos Sertões ao Atlântico*, 137-184; Rodrigo, 'Spanish Merchants and the Slave Trade: From Legality to Illegality, 1814-1870', in Josep M. Fradera and Christopher Schmidt Nowara, eds., *Slavery and Antislavery in Spain's Atlantic Empire* (New York: Berghahn, 2013), 176-199.

[51] The Portuguese in New York also had links with Portuguese traffickers in the Bight of Benin, though these connections were not as strong and Benin was a much smaller source of captives. Robin Law, *Ouidah*, 235-6.

[52] For Matanzas Governor's subsequent directive to expel the Portuguese and Brazilians, see records from Archivo Histórico Provincial de Matanzas, digitized by Endangered Archives Program, 060/1/1/97. Available at

even purchasing land and slaves, few others were able to follow in his footsteps.[53] In the early 1860s, a few Portuguese and Brazilian traffickers would again attempt to establish themselves in Cuba, but were promptly expelled.[54]

The second major group of investors had few such problems in Cuba. They were long-term residents of the island and exercised impressive local power. Many were wealthy planters and merchants who had profited from Cuba's nineteenth-century sugar boom and the illegal slave trade before 1850. One important asset was their large estates, which they used to temporarily house newly arrived captives and to conduct illicit slave sales.[55] Another was their influence over the island's officials through the distribution of bribes. These payments had been a feature of the Cuban slave trade for decades, but by the 1850s, traffickers and officials had developed well-honed systems in many parts of the island. In the western jurisdiction of Pinar del Río, for example, investors and lieutenant governors established a formula that determined the size of bribes based on the number of incoming captives.[56] At a more distant remove, but no less importantly, Cuban slave traders also maintained strong business and political ties with Spain, offering them logistical and financial support for slaving operations, as well as a degree of protection from Cuban officials who were genuinely committed to suppression.[57]

The island's most powerful slave trader, Julián Zulueta y Amondo, enjoyed all these advantages. Born into a wealthy mercantile family in Álava, in Spain's Basque region in 1814, he emigrated to Cuba in 1832. A few years later, he bought his first plantation in the key sugar-

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http://eap.bl.uk/database/overview_item.a4d?catId=214;r=2082. For Brazilian slave traders in Cuba see Concha to Ministro, Aug. 12, 1855, Legajo 3549/4, Ultramar, AHN.

[53] 'Expediente de solicitud de Manuel Basilio Reis', June 19, 1861, Legajo 4676/64, Ultramar, AHN. See also *Diario de la Marina*, 3 May 1861.

[54] Domingo Dulce to Ministro de Ultramar, Aug. 30, 1863, Legajo 4686/52, caja 1, Ultramar, AHN.

[55] Francisco Serrano to Ministro de la Guerra y Ultramar, Sept. 6, 1861, Legajo 3549/3, Ultramar, AHN.

[56] Joseph Crawford to Lord Clarendon, June 10, 1853, FO 84/905, TNA.

[57] For examples of these connections, see Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 186–7; Rodrigo, *Slavery and anti-slavery*, 176–99.

producing province of Matanzas. Zulueta subsequently made his base along the expanding sugar frontier in Colon. By the 1860s, he owned four large sugar estates, which boasted highly sophisticated mills, complete with triple-effect vacuum evaporators, centrifuges, and gas lighting. Over 2,000 slaves labored upon his lands, many of whom had arrived illegally from Africa. Such was Zulueta's power that his henchmen openly marched one group of captives overland from the coast to one of his estates. His commercial connections and standing in Cuban society permitted such brazen disregard for the law. By the 1860s, he was married to the niece of a powerful Spanish-born slave trader, Salvador Samá y Martí. Later in life, after the trade had ended, he was awarded the titles Marques of Alava, and Viscount of Casa-Blanca, by the Spanish crown.[58]

Although the island's investors exerted considerable local influence and developed strong ties with ship-suppliers in US ports, they suffered from weak ties with traffickers in Africa. This problem was mainly a legacy of Spain's limited interaction with the African coast during previous centuries. Unlike the Portuguese, the Spanish had never developed a strong foothold in the African regions that fed into the slave trade. Even as other powers stepped up their slaving in the eighteenth century, Spain depended on other nations to supply its imperium with captives.[59] By the 1830s and 1840s, when Cuba was a major destination for captives, only a few Havana traffickers such as Pedro Martínez ran slaving establishments on the African coast. By the 1850s, most Cuban traffickers were still relying on lusophone and African merchants to organize shipments on their

[58] These details are drawn from José Luciano Franco, *Comercio clandestine de esclavos* (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1980), 246–9; and Laird W. Bergad, *Cuban rural society in the nineteenth century: the social and economic history of monoculture in Matanzas* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 51, 126–30. See also, Marques, *The United States*, 191-3. For more on Basque slave trade in Cuba and their international networks, see Barcia Paz, Manuel. "'Fully Capable of Any Iniquity': The Atlantic Human Trafficking Network of the Zangroniz Family," *The Americas*, 73, 3 (2016), 303-24.

[59] Alex Borucki, David Eltis, and David Wheat, "Atlantic History and the Slave Trade to Spanish America," *The American Historical Review* 120 (2015): 433-461. For Spanish reliance on the Portuguese on the African coast see William Gervase Clarence-Smith, "The Portuguese Contribution to the Cuban Slave and Coolie Trades in the Nineteenth Century," *Slavery and Abolition* 5 (1984): 25-27.

behalf.[60]

Financial records captured by British, Portuguese, and US suppression campaigns show how the lusophone traffickers in New York and their counterparts in Cuba manipulated the trade's investment structure to overcome their strategic disadvantages. These sources reveal financial data for fifteen of the approximately 359 voyages that sailed the Atlantic Ocean after 1850. This is clearly a small sample, but it is broadly representative of the traffic. Almost every vessel, for instance, embarked from US or Cuban ports, the major departure regions for the vast majority of post-1850 voyages. Equally, all but one slaver received captives, or intended to receive them, in West Central Africa, which is generally reflective of the region's share of embarkations after 1850.[61] Furthermore, all but one of the voyages was destined for Cuba, reflecting the island's dominance as a disembarkation zone. Finally, the fifteen voyages are spread widely and evenly across the post-1850 trade, meaning that there are at least a handful of cases to analyze from every half decade up to 1866 (see Table 2.4 in the appendix for more information on these voyages).

In thirteen of the fifteen voyages, speculators used an investment model that Emilio Sanchez and the American informant in Lisbon described as "freighting."[62] Under this system there were two ways to invest. The first was to buy shares in what traffickers called the "ship." These shares funded the operating costs of the voyage such as the purchase of the vessel, repairs, crew wages, and provisions. The second method was investment in the "cargo." The role of "cargo" investors was to purchase captives and force them aboard the slaver. After the vessel departed the African coast, it would carry, or "freight," the captives to Cuba, with the "cargo"

[60] Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 153-4, 181.
[61] Seventy five percent or 157,000 of all 226,000 embarkations, VOYAGES: http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/jJtXLuGJ
[62] Sanchez memo in Archibald to Malmesbury, May 3, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA; John O'Sullivan to William L. Marcy, 24 August 1856, SDR, NARA. The *Clotilda*, which appears to have operated along the lines of the *Restaurador*, did not 'freight' slaves. See Table 2.4 in appendix.

owners continuing to own them until their arrival in the Caribbean. When the voyage had been completed, a consignee would receive all the captives and pay the voyage manager for the delivery, after deducting bribes and consignee fees. As the consignee proceeded to sell the captives to Cuban planters, the manager would split the profits from the voyage, allocating one half to investors in the "ship" and the other half to investors in the "cargo." One variant of this model was for "cargo" owners to send their own captives to particular consignees in Cuba. In these instances, the various consignees acted for the "cargo" investors, selling the captives on their behalf, and paying fees to the "ship" investors who had funded the transatlantic crossing.[63] In both cases, therefore, there were investments in the "ship" and the "cargo." In other words, "freighting" was the norm.

The "freighting" model was not new to this era of the slave trade, but was ideally suited to it. Unlike much of the British and French trades, especially from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, Portuguese, Brazilian, and Spanish traffickers had "freighted" captives extensively during the legal era.[64] Whereas the British and French funded voyages purely in the metropole and bartered for captives on the African coast, the "freighting" model invited traffickers in Africa to purchase captives for the voyage themselves. The main advantage of extending "cargo" investment in this way was that it translated into good organization on the African side of the trade. This feature of "freighting" was particularly important with anti-slavery vessels patrolling the coast. Because African traffickers' capital was also at stake, they were inclined to dispatch vessels as quickly and securely as possible. The bartering alternative, by contrast, was slower and riskier. Traffickers occasionally used additional risk-limiting tactics such as splitting investments over

[63] See the case of the unnamed vessel from 1854, Table 2.4 in appendix.
[64] Joseph Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830*, (Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), 314-378. For the British trade see Kenneth Morgan, "Remittance Procedures in the Eighteenth-Century British Slave Trade," *The Business History Review* 79 (2005): 715-749. For the French trade see Robert Louis Stein, *The French Slave Trade in the Eighteenth Century: An Old Regime Business* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979), 51-94.

several voyages and widening investment to include small shareholders, but it seems that the key link during this period was between American-based and African-based traders.[65]

The case of the *Restaurador* indicates the importance of tying African suppliers to the outcome of a slaving venture. This vessel journeyed from Cuba to the New Calabar River on the Bight of Biafra in early 1853. Upon his arrival, the Spanish captain, Juan Coll, declared that he would offer no freight, but would exchange his cargo of *aguardiente* (sugarcane brandy) and Mexican gold for captives. Initially, Coll's plan seemed to be working. He struck deals with several African merchants, handing over the goods and specie in return for promises that the captives would be delivered after twenty days. But these arrangements, which left the merchants with the booty in-hand and no stake in the voyage, quickly unraveled. Just a few days later, one of the merchants, Ammacree of New Calabar, informed local white merchants about the slaver in the River. Soon, the news reached the British man-of-war HMS *Ferret*, which was cruising off the coast. Two weeks into Coll's wait for the slaves, the *Ferret* pounced, capturing him and the *Restaurador*. The voyage had failed completely.[66]

Debacles of this kind encouraged investors in the shipping centers of Cuba and New York to draw on African support via the freighting model. In some cases, Cuban "ship" investors joined forces with "cargo" investors in the Bight of Benin. In these instances, vessels typically arrived at Ouidah or Porto Novo, where Brazilians and African traffickers put their captives aboard.[67] In other cases, Spanish-registered vessels sailed for West Central Africa. One such slaver, *Dolores*, brought 595 captives to Cuba in 1855. The "cargo" of this vessel was owned almost completely

[65] According to David Eltis, another common method of decreasing risk in the Cuba traffic was to spread ship investment over several voyages through large joint stock companies. Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 152-3.
[66] John Beecroft to Lord Clarendon, Feb. 20, 1854, FO84/950, TNA.
[67] For Domingo Mustich, a rare Spanish resident of the African coast who helped with some of these shipments and was himself a supplier of captives, see *ibid*, Benjamin Campbell to Lord Clarendon, Aug. 12, 1854, FO84/950, TNA, and Law, *Ouidah*, 222.

by lusophone residents of Ambriz and the colonial capital, Luanda.[68] In each of these ventures, the Africa-based investors made sure to dispatch the slavers swiftly, while "ship" investors in Cuba wielded their local power to ensure the safe disembarkation and sale of captives.

The New York lusophones also used the freighting model. In most cases, they drew heavily on their strong ties with West Central Africa. The voyages of the *Braman* (1855), the *Pierre Soulé* (1856) and the *Mary E. Smith* (1856) all featured investment from both regions.[69] In each of these examples, a handful of investors, sometimes as few as three, bought up "ship" shares and dispatched the vessel from the US. When the vessels reached West Central Africa, "cargo" investors or their managers were waiting to put the captives aboard. Similar to the Cuba-Africa voyages, local accomplices watched the coast for cruisers, allowing all three ships to escape out into the Atlantic Ocean with hundreds of captives crammed beneath their decks.

Despite its benefits on the African side, freighting did not erase the lusophones' insecurity in Cuba. The case of the *Pierre Soulé* highlights their vulnerability. In this instance, several of the New Yorkers combined with thirty-five "cargo" investors in southern Angola to bring 467 captives to Cardenas (see Table 2.6 in appendix). When José Lucas Henriques da Costa, the voyage manager, arrived on the island, he applied for the delivery fee, but to his dismay, the Cubans paid far below market rates. With no recourse to the law or to powerful intermediaries on the island, he had to accept $85,000 for the captives. This sum, he wrote to one of the investors in Angola, caused "the whole business [to] suffer a loss of $48,000."[70]

Although defrauding the lusophones was satisfying for Cuban slave dealers, such chicanery was ultimately counterproductive for Cuban traffickers and for the island's sugar economy. As the

[68] TNA, FO84/995, W. Stafford Jerningham to Lord Clarendon, 8 March 1856.
[69] Sources for these voyages are listed in Table 2.4 in appendix.
[70] Lucas da Costa to João Soares, May 20, 1856, enc. in John O'Sullivan to Lewis Cass, Mar. 28, 1857, SDR, NARA.

case of the *Dolores* had shown, Cuban investors needed lusophone support in West Central Africa because a large portion of their trade was centered there. Cheating on the Cuban side would only harm their business prospects. Moreover, the island's planters relied on lusophone voyages such as the *Pierre Soulé*'s to meet their growing demand for captives, especially as sugar prices soared in the late 1850s. Lacking both unfettered access to American ships and strong connections with Africa, Cuban traffickers could not satisfy that demand without outside help. The lusophones may even have underlined their importance to the island's sugar economy by briefly retreating from the Cuba trade after the *Pierre Soulé* affair. In the same year, New York and West Central African investors made one final, futile attempt to revive the traffic to Brazil.[71]

In the late 1850s, historically high slave prices in Cuba and the promise of record returns on investment fostered a new spirit of cooperation among speculators in New York, Cuba, and West Central Africa. Other combinations may have persisted, but strikingly, all three 1858 and 1859 voyages in the fifteen-voyage sample were funded by investors in all three regions. These voyages were made by the *Haidee*, *Tacony*, and *William H. Stewart*. Emilio Sanchez described investments in the first of these voyages, the *Haidee*, which had set sail from New York in 1858.[72] According to Sanchez, there had been six shareholders in the "ship." Four were Portuguese slave traders in New York City and two were among Cuba's wealthiest planter-merchants. One of the Cubans was Zulueta. On the "cargo" side of the operation, he noted some captives belonged to New York traffickers who maintained slave depots around the Congo River, while West Central African traffickers had sent the others "on freight." In other words, the voyage enjoyed investment, and logistical support, on every leg of the voyage. Underlining the effectiveness of triple-region

[71] For the voyage of the *Mary E Smith*, see Table 2.4 in appendix
[72] For breakdown see Table 2.5, p.86. For more detail see Sanchez to Archibald, enc. in Archibald to Lord Malmesbury, Mar. 8, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA.

funding, Sanchez noted that the *Haidee* had brought 903 captives to Cuba and had been a complete success for all the investors.[73]

Although cooperation boosted all investors' chances of success, these partners were not equals. The "freighting" system had always rewarded investors in the "ship" more generously than investors in the "cargo." In the case of the *Pierre Soulé*, "cargo" investors received returns that were worth little more than the Angolan value of the captives, yet the "ship" investors made a profit of one hundred percent.[74] "Cargo" investors' dividends would have been much greater had the Cubans not taken advantage of Lucas, but the relative discrepancy between ship and cargo profits would have remained the same. There was logic in that discrepancy. "Ship" investors did much of legwork in New York and Cuba, and many took on the personal risks of serving aboard the slave ship in managerial roles. It therefore made sense that they would be generously rewarded. But when the Cuban speculators joined with the New Yorkers in triple-region voyages, they demanded the greatest spoils while taking the fewest personal risks. In the case of the *Haidee*, for instance, the Cubans bought up lucrative shares in the "ship" without ever setting foot on the vessel, never mind sailing to Africa. Another example of Cuban authority, these arrangements demonstrate that the power players in the illegal slave trade were those who controlled the disembarkation zone.

The world of slave trade investment was therefore cooperative, but hierarchical. Pressure from slave trade suppression and the relative weakness of individual groups of investors necessitated some degree of collaboration. By the late 1850s, high prices for slaves in Cuba

[73] *Ibid*. Zulueta was also deeply involved in the Chinese 'coolie' trade to Cuba from the late 1840s. For an overview of this trade and Zulueta's involvement, see Evelyn Hu-DeHart, 'La Trata Amarilla: The "Yellow Trade" and the Middle Passage, 1847-1884,' in Emma Christopher, Cassandra Pybus, and Marcus Rediker, *Many Middle Passages: Forced Migration and the Making of the Modern Word* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press), 166-83.
[74] For source, see Table 2.4 in appendix.

encouraged speculators in all three zones to pool their strengths and resources. At the same time, some assets were clearly more valuable than others and a hierarchy of investment emerged. Cuban investors such as Zulueta were at the top. They took took the least risk, but stood to make the largest profits. Next were the lusophones in New York, such as Botelho, who typically engaged in the risky business of operating voyages, but also stood to gain handsomely from shares in the "ship." At the bottom were speculators in Africa, who were generally relegated to "cargo" shareholding. They took little risk, but earned much smaller returns on their investments.

Laundering and Circulating Slave Trade Capital

The illegal slave trade's disparate investment sources required speculators to discreetly move large amounts of capital over long distances. One major transfer was the pooling of funds to cover a voyage's shipping expenses. These costs were substantial and heavily concentrated in the slaver's point of departure. In most cases, it took around $30,000 to get a vessel out of port.[75] One of the largest expenses was the purchase of an appropriate vessel (Emilio Sanchez noted that slavers typically cost about $10,000 in New York City).[76] After further payments to intermediaries who purchased and registered the vessel, investors prepared it for an ostensibly legal voyage. That involved sourcing the crew and hiring carpenters, caulkers, and others to perform repairs. It also meant inconspicuously purchasing and loading all the stores and equipment necessary for a successful slaving voyage, such as casks for water, provisions, and weapons.[77]

According to the freighting model, it was the responsibility of "ship" investors to cover

[75] Estimate from *De Bow's Review*, 23, 1857, 50 in Ferreira, *Dos Sertões,* 173.
[76] Sanchez to Archibald enc. in Archibald to Lord Malmesbury Mar. 8, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA.
[77] Most vessels also carried water casks, provisions, cooking equipment, weapons, a well-appointed medicine chest, maps, charts, nautical instruments and even lumber, which the crew used to construct a slave deck when the vessel was out to sea. See John O'Sullivan to William Marcy, Aug. 24, 1856, SDR, NARA; *ibid*, 28 March 1857.

these expenses. Pooling "ship" capital in an outfitting port such as New York or Havana was sometimes straightforward because all the relevant investors resided there, but in many cases "ship" investors were located in two regions. Unless traffickers retained credit with their distant partners, they had to send investment capital on long-distance, border-crossing journeys before it could be put to use.[78] Moving those funds was both technically challenging and risky. On the technical side, speculators had to ensure they issued funds in forms that were redeemable at their destination. Preferably, they would also be inexpensive to transport and retentive of their value during transit. The major hazard was that suppression authorities would seize investors' capital as it passed through their jurisdictions. With thousands of dollars on the move, steering capital into position was therefore a potentially complicated and high-stakes endeavor.

Sanchez appreciated that mix more than most observers. In 1859, he wrote to his handler, the British consul, Edward Archibald, describing the "ship" investments in the voyage of the *Haidee*. The 325-ton vessel had departed New York the previous year, and eventually disembarked nine hundred West Central Africans at Cardenas.[79] According to Sanchez, there had been six "ship" investors in the voyage. Two of the speculators were the Basque Julián Zulueta and a Galician José Plá. Like Zulueta, Plá had risen to become a major sugar planter, enslaver, and merchant in Cuba.[80] The other four investors were New York Lusophones. Between them, the six investors sank $27,000 into the *Haidee*'s voyage. Individually, the sums ranged from Zulueta's $8,000 stake to Antonio Augusto Botelho's $2,500 (see Table 2.5).

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[78] Some distant investors probably had accounts running with their associates in outfitting ports and did not need to send capital on these journeys. Enclosure in John Morgan to Lord Clarendon, Aug. 11, 1856, FO84/995 offers some clues about credit that investors in West Central Africa may have held in New York.

[79] See Sanchez to Archibald enc. in Archibald to Lord Malmesbury Mar. 8, 1859, FO84/1086 TNA. The *Haidee* was a fast clipper ship. Before entered the slave trade it had made trips to China and the Mediterrean carrying legal cargos. Glenn A. Knoblock, *The American Clipper Ship, 1845-1920: A Comprehensive History, with a Listing of Builders and their Ships* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Co, 2014), 237-8.

[80] On Plá, see Juan J, Burgoa Fernández, *El Marqués de Amboage, Ramón Plá Y Monge, Un Ilustre Ferrolano* (Ferrol: Vision Libros, 2011), 30-1.

Table 2.5: *The 'ship' shareholding in the voyage of the* Haidee*, 1858*

Investor	**Investment Level (US$)**
Julián Zulueta (Cuba)	8,000
José Plá (Cuba)	4,000
Lima Viana (New York)	5,000
Joaquim Miranda (New York)	5,000
Antonio Augusto Botelho (New York)	2,500
I. Abranches & Almeida (New York)	2,500
	Total: 27,000

Sanchez's letter detailed the international odyssey of the investors' capital. It began when Botelho made a trip from New York to Cuba. During his brief visit (he had been expelled from the island in 1854), he collected a combined $12,000 from Zulueta and Plá. The merchant-planters issued the funds in two forms: a $5,000 bill of exchange, and the rest in Spanish gold doubloons. Sanchez did not say what Botelho did with the doubloons upon his return to New York, but he probably used them to help purchase the *Haidee*, which soon became the property of Inocêncio Abranches, another Portuguese investor in New York. He did note that Botelho presented the bill of exchange to Juan M. Ceballos, a merchant-banker of Cantabrian origin. According to Sanchez, Ceballos readily accepted the bill and used its value to buy 1,000 barrels of flour on Botelho's behalf. The Portuguese then had the flour loaded onto the *Haidee*, which he cleared for Cadiz.

When they arrived in Spain, Botelho sold the flour, and had one of the *Haidee*'s yardarms repaired. Soon they set off again for the British Crown Colony of Gibraltar, where Botelho bought large amounts of rice and beans. After returning once more to Cadiz for bread, water, and further fittings, the *Haidee* finally set sail for the Loango Coast, at the very northern end of West Central Africa. Two months later, its crew were cramming 1,100 captives beneath its decks; two hundred captives would perish during the transatlantic crossing to Cuba.[81]

Through these twists and turns, the *Haidee* investors overcame the logistical and suppressionist challenges of the illegal slave trade, shifting capital from the Caribbean through North America and Europe to Africa with apparent ease. At the beginning of the affair, Zulueta and Plá had issued part of their investment in gold doubloons, a form of capital that was both readily available to wealthy merchants in Havana and welcomed by traders in New York.[82] Similarly, the bill of exchange was safe and convenient to transport, and, in the hands of Juan Ceballos, a leading merchant banker in New York, not at all suspicious. By turning the bill into flour in New York, Ceballos hid slave trade capital in about as dull a commodity as New York could muster. In Cadiz, Botelho seems to have turned the flour into an innocent repair job on his ship. He had exposed the voyage to suspicion and the investors' capital to seizure when he bought large quantities of food, but his discretion (or possibly his bribes) was sufficient to get the *Haidee* out of Europe and on its way to Africa.[83]

The *Haidee* investors and their allies had planned every detail carefully, but they were also

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[81] Archibald to Malmesbury, Mar. 8, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA. For background and business of Juan Miguel Ceballos, see *NYT*, Feb. 23, 1886. For an example of drafts flowing from Cuba to Baltimore to purchase slavers, see Solomon Beale to Caleb B Smith, Nov. 7, 28, Dec. 11, 1862, Misc. Letters Relating to the Suppression of the Slave Trade, Dec. 30, 1858-Feb 3, 1871.

[82] For New York merchants' willingness to accept gold, see O'Sullivan to Marcy, Aug. 24, 1856, STD, NARA.

[83] For a damning portrait of Spanish failure to suppress the trade in Cadiz, see Alexander Graham Dunlop to William H. Wylde, Sept. 20, 1864, WYL/27/38-40, Durham University Archives, Wylde Papers (henceforth DUA, WP).

exploiting the opportunities offered by structural changes in Atlantic world economy during the nineteenth century. The most significant of those changes, the liberalization of trade, had effectively opened up the laundering routes. Freer trade between Spanish jurisdictions and the US was especially germane. When Zulueta and Plá sent their bill and gold to Ceballos, they were relying on a relationship built upon the booming Havana-New York sugar trade. This traffic grew steadily since Spain had opened Cuba to foreign commerce in the late eighteenth century. By 1858, when the *Haidee*'s voyage took place, the US had surpassed the Iberian power to become Cuba's largest trading partner.[84] Several of the individuals who laundered the *Haidee* investments – Zulueta, Plá, and Ceballos – were among the biggest traders plying the Havana-New York nexus. In fact, according to Sanchez, Ceballos was "one of the largest agents of Cuban houses" in New York.[85] Moreover, Sanchez described him as "an intimate friend" of Zulueta and Plá.[86] With such credentials, Ceballos was an ideal slave trade accomplice.

The New York-Cadiz connection was another important axis in this affair. When the *Haidee* made its journey with the barrels of flour, it was plying a relatively new and growing commercial route. The disintegration of Spain's Atlantic empire in the early nineteenth century had ended Cadiz's "golden era," but it had given rise to an expansion of the port's trade with foreign nations.[87] The US was one of its new trading partners. When the *Haidee* arrived in Cadiz in 1858, it joined a stream of vessels from every major port east of the Mississippi River.[88] New York merchants, including Sanchez, sent goods to Cadiz and it is likely that during his long career as an overseas trader, Ceballos did likewise. As a merchant of Spanish origin, he certainly would

[84] For the rise of this trade see Louis Perez, *Cuba and The United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy*, (Athens GA: University of Georgia Press, 2003), 1-28.
[85] See Sanchez to Archibald enc. in Edward Archibald to Lord Malmesbury, Mar. 8, 1859, FO84/1086.
[86] *Ibid*.
[87] Patrick O'Flanagan, *Port Cities of Atlantic Iberia, c. 1500–1900* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2008), 112-15.
[88] Robert Albion, *The Rise of New York Port,* 394-5, 399.

have known that Cadiz was a major gateway to the Iberian Peninsula and that Bothelo would find a good market for American flour there.[89] As his work in New York demonstrates, he had no scruples about assisting traffickers in their sordid work.

These capital transfers took place at the early stages of a voyage, but the ones that probably interested speculators most took place at the end. These were the all-important remittances of dividends. As the case of the *Pierre Soulé* shows, investors, merchants, and bankers in the US, and their partners abroad, all had crucial roles to play.[90] In this particular case, investors had run the voyage along traditional "freighting" lines. The "ship" shareholders appear to have been the lusophones in New York, since it was one of their number, José Lucas, who managed the voyage's affairs in the Americas. On the "cargo" side of the speculation were thirty-five residents of southern Angola, where the slaver had departed the African coast late in 1855. This pattern meant that returns would have to be routed through between Cuba, the US, and Angola before everyone would receive their share.

Lucas initiated the laundering-circulating process in Havana shortly after the *Pierre Soulé* arrived with its captives at Cardenas. First, he contacted Justo Mazorra, a wealthy merchant in Havana, who eventually agreed to pay him $85,000 in drafts and specie.[91] The records from this case do not explain precisely how Mazorra made the payment, but they do disclose that he called on two Havana merchant-bankers, Martín Riera and Nicolás Martínez Valdivieso, for their help with the transaction. Both Riera and Martínez were influential figures in *Banco Español* or Spanish Bank, which had been established under Royal Charter in Havana the previous year.[92] Riera was

[89] For Sanchez's Cadiz trade see *NYT*, Oct. 21, 1851.
[90] For this case, see John O'Sullivan to Lewis Cass, Mar. 28, 1857, SDR, NARA.
[91] *Ibid*.
[92] *Directorio de artes, comercio e industrias de la Habana*, *1859* (Habana: Litografia de T. Cuesta, 1859, tercera parte), 8-9.

the bank's *subdirector*, the second most senior position, while Martínez was *Consejero* or board member.[93] According to the bank's charter, two of its main roles were dealing in bills of exchange and issuing specie.[94] In fact, it was the only institution on the island to hold the latter responsibility. Although it is unclear whether the Riera and Martínez used their influence in *Banco Español* to help issue Mazorra's specie/bills payment, the bank was certainly uniquely equipped to do so. The island's most senior official, Governor Domingo Dulce, certainly believed that there was a connection between the bank and the slave trade. In 1863 he identified several Portuguese traffickers who had recently taken up residence in Cuba and specifically mentioned their shareholdings in the bank as a point of suspicion.[95]

The specie and gold that Lucas carried back to New York was part of a broader current of slave trade remittances travelling north from Cuba. Several traces of this flow emerge from merchants' papers, spy reports, and newspaper columns. The correspondence of New York sugar importer Moses Taylor shows that in 1854, Drake Bros., an Anglo-Cuban merchant house in Havana, issued two bills of exchange worth a total of $12,000 in favor of José Lima Vianna, a Portuguese trafficker with no business in Cuba except the slave trade. Vianna brought the bills to Henry Coit, a sugar merchant in New York, who endorsed the bills and released the funds. According to Emilio Sanchez, the notorious Cunha Reis travelled the same route in the winter of 1858, carrying a massive $60,000 in drafts from the voyage of the *Panchita*.[96]

It was also common for traffickers to step off the Havana steamer lugging boxes of specie. In 1860, the *New York Herald* noted that Vianna had recently brought home a box of specie worth

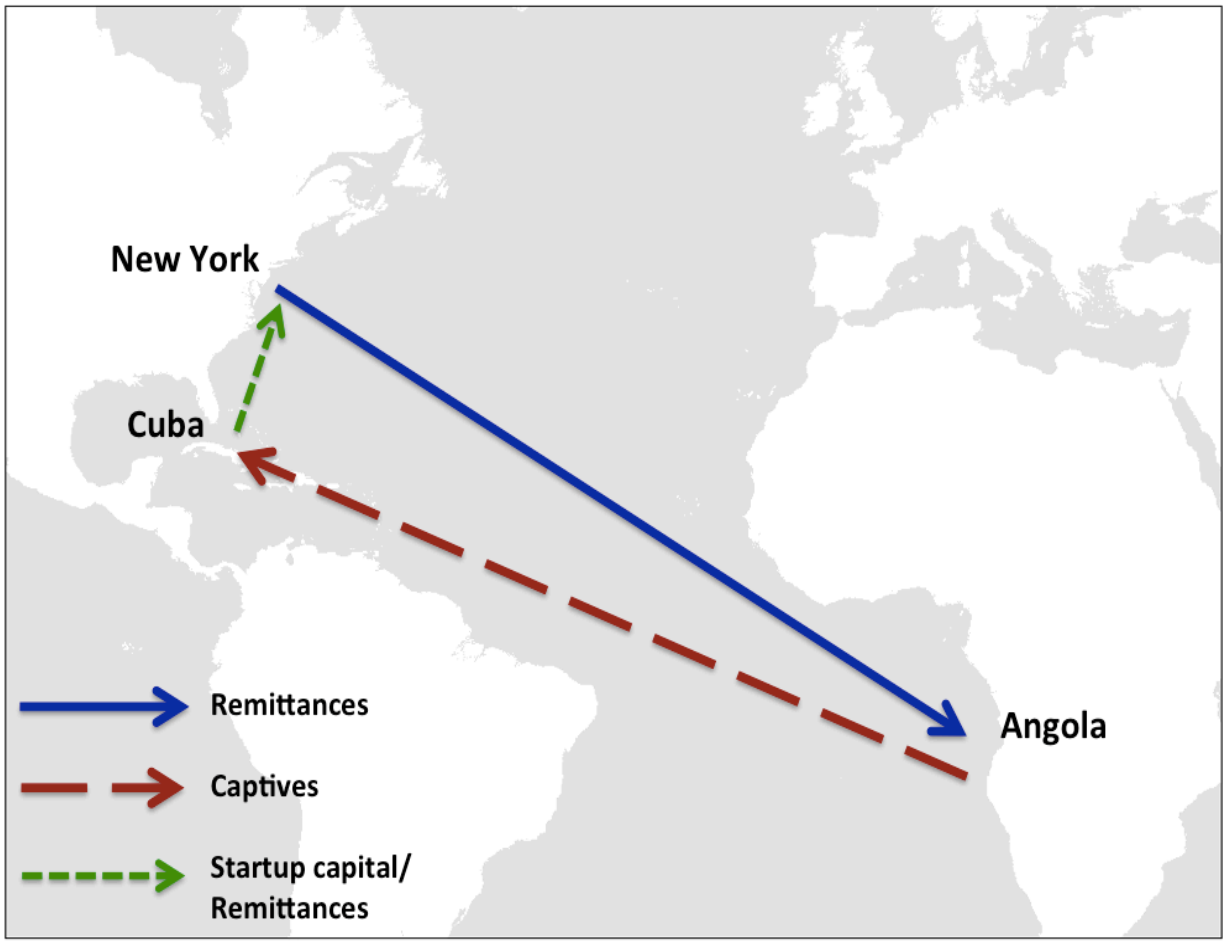
[93] Mazorra held the lesser position of *Supernumerario* (supernumerary). *Ibid*.
[94] Ibid; *Estatutos y reglamento del Banco Español de la Habana* (Habana: Imprenta del Gobierno y Capitanía General por S.M., 1856).
[95] Given the slave trade's dependence on large amounts of gold for remittances and that traffickers filled its highest posts, it is likely that the Bank had been established at least partly to service the illegal slave trade. Domingo Dulce to Ministro de Ultramar, Aug. 30, 1863, Legajo 4686/52, caja 1, Ultramar, AHN.
[96] Sanchez to Archibald enc. in Archibald to Lord Malmesbury, Apr. 5, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA

$7,650 from a recent trip from Havana.[97] Incriminatingly, this list appeared right above an article from the paper's Cuba correspondent wherein he claimed he was in possession of "proof strong as holy Writ" that from six to eight thousand Africans had arrived in the island within the last ten days. On other occasions, investors received remittances in commodities. In the case of the *Mary E. Smith*, the final, unsuccessful attempt to bring captives to Brazil in 1856, Cunha Reis wrote to shipboard manager João José Vianna, explaining: "I want to have my share [of the profits] here [New York], for which purpose the *Isla de Cuba* is to go there [Rio de Janeiro] and come with coffee."[98]

Havana to New York was only one leg on the journey of slave trade remittances. Slave trade capital flowed into New York, but it also flowed outward to investors in Africa. These speculators also expected their dividends. In the case of the Pierre Soulé, Lucas sent these funds through João Alberto Machado, the Africa trader in New York.[99] In the summer of 1856, Machado dispatched the schooner *Flying Eagle* from New York to southern Angola with a legal trading cargo worth $30,000 and 432 gold doubloons. Machado had consigned most of the goods to João Soares of Novo Redondo, who had sent forty-eight captives aboard the Pierre Soulé. Two months later, the vessel arrived safely in Benguela. Soares was about to take his portion and distribute the rest to the others when the Portuguese authorities launched a surprise raid on his home. After searching his residence and discovering his incriminating correspondence with Lucas, they immediately seized the *Flying Eagle*'s cargo and gold.

[97] *New York Herald*, Nov. 30, 1860
[98] Cunha Reis to João José Vianna, Oct. 2, 1855, enc. in John Morgan to Lord Clarendon, 13 June 1856, *Accounts and Papers of the House of Commons* vol. 44, (London: Harrison and Sons, 1857), 132.
[99] John O'Sullivan to State Department, July 28, 1856 & Mar. 28, 1857, SDR, NARA

Figure 2.4: *Capital Circuits in the Illegal Slave Trade, 1850-1863*



In most cases, however, suppression forces failed to intercept slave trade capital as it circulated around the Atlantic basin. Unlike the case of the *Pierre Soule*, slave trade capital usually moved around the Atlantic basin with impunity, as depicted in Figure 2.4. The African end of the trade seemed to be as secure as anywhere else. In 1857, John Willis, the US Consul in Luanda, informed the Secretary of State William Marcy that the "slave trade was flourishing" in West Central Africa. Supporting this traffic, he said, was "American gold," which was "quite plenty" on

the Lower Congo River, "having been brought in those vessels which clear from New York."[100] Traffickers would continue to circulate capital in this way until the final demise of the traffic in the 1860s.

Conclusion

In 1863, Edward Archibald, the British consul in New York reflected on how his adopted city had come to play such a key role in the illegal slave trade. Writing to the Foreign Office, Archibald noted: "A large and populous maritime city, within a few days sail of, and in constant communication with, Havana, here have congregated the Spanish and Portuguese projectors of slaving voyages." It was awkward prose, but it caught the essence of what had made New York a successful slaving port. On the one hand, certain set structures were crucial. These included the City's proximity to Havana, longstanding federal law concerning the flag, New York's immense mercantile facilities, and the liberalization of world trade in the nineteenth century. On the other hand, slave-trading merchants had exploited the opportunities they had been given. With their strong ties to distant slaving ports, their slave trading know-how, and their deep pockets, they had turned US ports into headquarters for the illegal slave trade. Inveterate border-crossers, Cunha Reis and his ilk were adept at moving, adapting, exploiting. Their purview was always global, and never paid respect to human costs.

These traffickers were responsible for three main US roles in the illegal slave trade between 1851 and 1863. The clearest, to contemporaries and historians alike, was shipping. American vessels were vital. The vast majority of the 226,000 captives who departed African shores during this period, did so aboard a ship built in the US. Most of these slavers sailed under the American

[100] Willis to Marcy, Jan 9, 1857, Despatches from US Consuls in St. Paul de Loanda, 1854-1893, T430, roll 1, NARA, DC.

flag and enjoyed the protection it afforded. US ports, particularly New York City, were also important departure points for slave ships during this period. The second major role was voyage financing. Lusophone traffickers in New York were an important source of slave trade capital, although they often funded voyages jointly with traffickers in West Central Africa and Cuba. The final role was money laundering. This task was accomplished by a handful of New York's merchants who specialized in receiving capital from Cuba, turning it into trade goods, and pulsing it out to the African coast. In combination, these roles indicate that the US played a much larger, more varied, and important role in the illegal slave trade than historians have acknowledged.

Chapter 3

Transatlantic Voyages of the American Blackbird Fleet

In the summer of 1856, fledgling poet Walt Whitman visited an impounded slave ship named the *Braman* at the Navy Dockyard in Brooklyn. With *Leaves of Grass* garnering a tepid early reception, Whitman had accepted a commission from *Life Illustrated* to describe the vessel, one of the few illegal slavers intercepted by US authorities before it sailed for Africa. It was a rare sight and Whitman took his readers through the vessel step by step. Beginning on the main deck, he took a "peep into the little dark forecastle, and another into the cabin at the other end." Then, he crawled into the hold. Faced with a dark and empty space, Whitman conjured a scene from the middle passage. Explaining that the hold was "the place where the slaves are … laid together spoon-fashion", he entreated his readers to "imagine … the miserable chattels, wondering to each other whither their white conquerors are carrying them." "Perhaps, in desperation," he continued, "they attempt to rise upon the crew, [but] are quieted … by promiscuous musket volleys fired down the hatchway." Having completed what he acknowledged was a "horrible vision," Whitman retreated from the *Braman*, and ended his exclusive tour of the would-be slaver.[1]

The following chapter compares what Whitman imagined with what actually took place. What were midcentury slaving voyages actually like? How closely did they resemble voyages from earlier periods? What made them distinctive? These matters were well-understood within the secretive world of the slave trade, which operated for over a decade in New York City, but they were not well known to outsiders like Whitman. His brief encounter with the slave trade produced some truths, but it was largely speculation.

[1] *Life Illustrated*, Aug. 2, 1856.

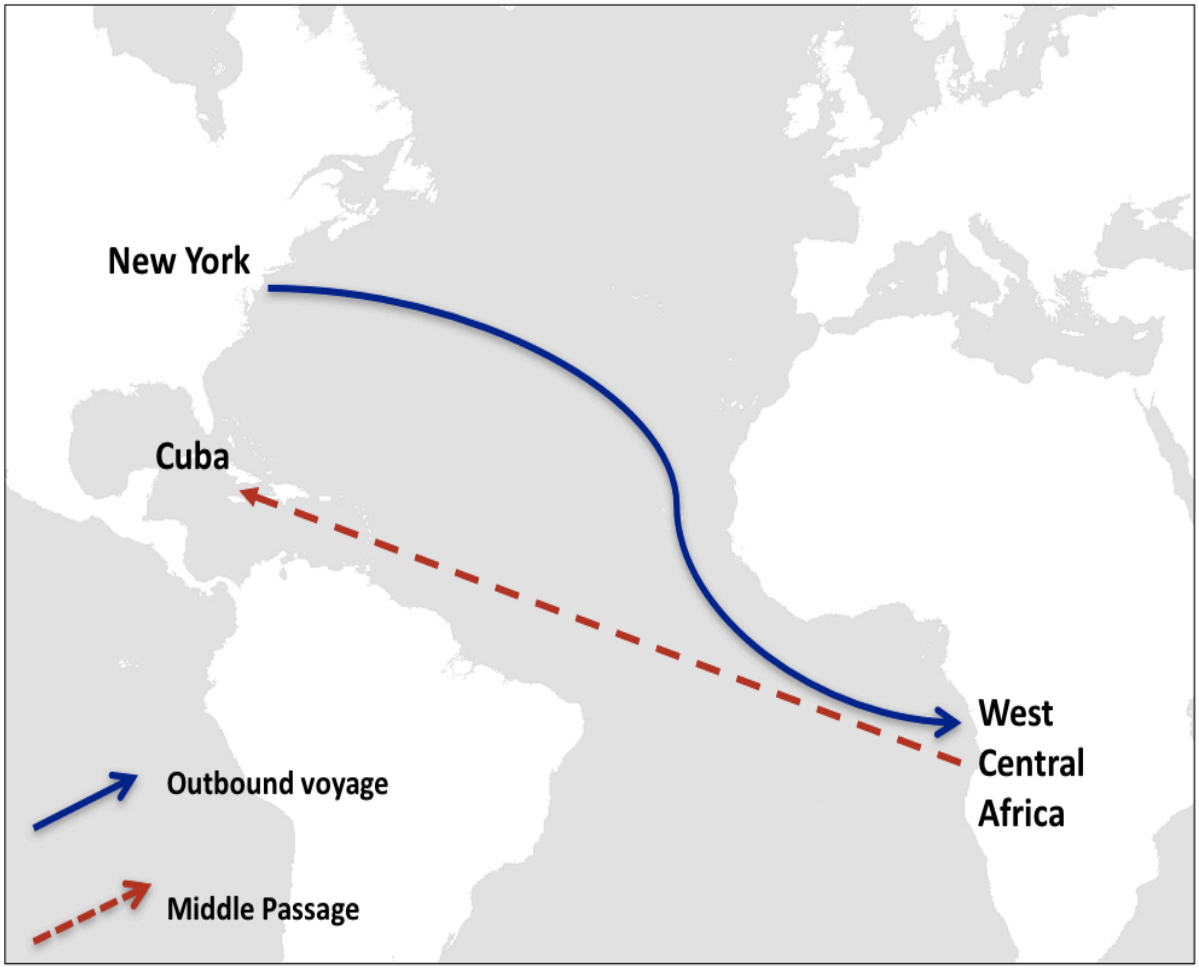
Historians have thrown more light on the subject. Their most common approach has been to trace a single voyage through the worlds of the illegal slave trade. Tom Henderson Wells wrote the first single-voyage analysis in 1967, examining the yacht *Wanderer*, which journeyed from Georgia to West Central Africa and back in 1859. In 2006, Erik Calonius produced another study of the same vessel. The following year, Sylviane Diouf traced the voyage of the schooner *Clotilda*, which journeyed from Alabama to the Bight of Benin and back in 1860. These studies have highlighted many important features of the trade, particularly the social and political context in the southern US, which was the origination and end point for each of these voyages. However, among the 500 or so voyages that took place after 1850, these were the only two that began and ended in the American South. The majority of voyages originated in northern ports, took in captives in Africa, and disembarked them in Cuba. The southern US slave trade is therefore heavily represented in current scholarship, but the dynamics of the main branch of the trade are not.[2]

The following chapter assesses the main features of the midcentury slave trade by examining the voyage of the brig *Julia Moulton* in 1854. This voyage was broadly typical of the post-1850 trade. Its course, shown in Figure 3.1, followed the regular midcentury track between the US, West Central Africa, and Cuba. The demographic profile of its captives and crew was also in keeping with the age, and like most voyages, it reached its destination as planned. The voyage

[2] Tom Henderson Wells, *The Slave Ship Wanderer* (Athens: University of Georgia Press: 1967); Erik Calonius, *The Wanderer: The Last American Slave Ship and the Conspiracy that Set Its Sails* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2006); Diouf, Sylviane A. *Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The Slave Ship Clotilda and the Story of the Last Africans Brought to America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). For other single-voyage analyses from earlier periods, see Nigel Tattersfield, *The Forgotten Trade: Comprising the Log of the Daniel and Henry of 1700 and Accounts of the Slave Trade from the Minor Ports of England 1698-1725* (London: Pimlico, 1998); Bruce L. Mouser, ed., *A Slaving Voyage to Africa and Jamaica: The Log of the Sandown, 1793- 1794* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2002); Robert Harms, *The Diligent: A Voyage Through the Worlds Of The Slave Trade* (New York: Basic Books, 2002); James Walvin, *The Zong: A Massacre, the Law and the End of Slavery* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011); Sean M. Kelley, *The Voyage of the Slave Ship Hare: A Journey into Captivity from Sierra Leone to South Carolina* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016); Marcus Rediker, *The Amistad Rebellion: An Atlantic Odyssey of Slavery and Freedom* (New York: Viking, 2012); Zeuske, Michael. *Amistad: A Hidden Network of Slavers and Merchants*. Translated by Steven Rendell. (Princeton, N.J.: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2014).

is also unusually well documented in British, US, and Cuban archives. This wealth of information is largely because the captives were intercepted in Cuba after landing, and the Captain, James Smith, was eventually arraigned in New York and put on trial in a federal court. Several of the crew testified about the voyage during his trial and Smith himself gave a remarkably candid interview to the newspaper, the New York *Evangelist*. Although these sources certainly do not give an unvarnished picture of the voyage, many details can be corroborated from other sources.[3]

Figure 3.1. *Voyage of the Julia Moulton, Jan.-June, 1854*



[3] Historians Warren Howard and Leonardo Marques have used several of these documents to analyze the trial, although they have said little about the voyage itself. Howard, *American Slavers*, 192-6; Marques, *The US*, 209-10.

The chapter is split into four sequential parts, roughly following the course of the *Julia Moulton*'s voyage. The first section examines how midcentury slave trading merchants purchased, manned, and cleared vessels in the Americas. The focus is on the traffic's main shipping center, New York, but many of the features highlighted in this section also applied to other important outfitting ports in the US and Cuba, such as New Orleans and Havana. The second part focuses on the African origins and demographic makeup of post-1850 captives, the final victims of the 350-year old trade. The third section analyzes captives' experiences of the middle passage, during a period when voyages were under increased threat from naval suppression. The final part explores the outcomes of voyages and pays particular attention to the destinations of captives and their subsequent legal and labor status.

Overall, the chapter shows that although illegal mid-century voyages shared features of the trade from previous eras – especially earlier in the century, when the trade was already outlawed throughout much of the Atlantic world – it was in some respects distinctive. Many of the trends from slaving voyages earlier in the century had grown more acute by the 1850s and 1860s. Some of those patterns related to the rising profitability of the trade, which encouraged slave traders to use larger vessels and cram more captives aboard them. Similarly, improving shipping technologies in the nineteenth century enabled traffickers to access larger, faster vessels. They also cut shipping costs and quickened voyages, which encouraged traffickers to bring captives from more distant regions of Africa. The most important factor, however, was international suppression. Anti-slave trade action, both on land and sea, affected everything from the ships traffickers used, to captives' conditions during the middle passage. Most significantly, by 1850, suppression had shoehorned slave traders into just a few safe havens, placing historic limits on the breadth of their smuggling routes. The chapter begins in one of those slaving hotspots: New York City.

Organizing illegal voyages in the Americas

The voyage of the *Julia Moulton* was jointly-organized by traffickers in the US, West Central Africa, and Cuba. Like many voyages after 1850, the Lusophone connection between New York and West Central Africa was imperative. In Manhattan, where the voyage began, the chief planner was José Antunes Lopes Lemos. An experienced and highly mobile trafficker, Lemos had operated in Brazil before the shuttering of its illegal trade in 1850. He subsequently moved to New York, and with the help of his fellow Portuguese and Brazilian immigrants, helped incorporate the US into the triangular slaving axis that dominated the trade after 1850.[4] One of Lemos' associates was the infamous Manoel Basilio da Cunha Reis. Another Portuguese, he was likely the second key player in the voyage. He was the main slave dealer near Ambrizette in West Central Africa, where the *Julia Moulton* captives boarded in the early summer of 1854. He had strong ties with the Portuguese in New York and would establish himself there in 1855.[5]

The Cuban side of the voyage was planned by a father and son: Salvador de Castro Sr. and Salvador de Casto Jr. Following a well-worn path from Spain, the elder Castro hailed from Galicia and had risen to become a major trafficker in Cuba. He was based in Trinidad de Cuba, a coastal town in south-central Cuba and part of a larger jurisdiction bearing the same name. His son, Castro Jr., was a native Cuban. He travelled frequently between Cuba and the US to organize slaving

[4] On Lemos' nationality, see C.H. Figanière to Joaquín César de Figanière y Morao, enc. in Figanière y Morao to Secretary of State Marcy, Nov. 17, 1854, M57, Roll T4, NARA. For Lemos's movements between Cuba and the US, and his identification as belonging to Brazil, see passenger lists of the *Black Warrior*, *NYT*, June 3, 1854; *NYT*, *Star of the West*, Apr. 28, 1860; New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957, NARA, M237, Roll 207, Line 4, List number 1083, Year 1859 & ibid, Line 7, List number 1148, Year 1860. Lemos was likely the "Lemus" that Emilio Sanchez, a British spy, described as one of the New York slaver traders involved in the voyage of the *Haidee* in 1858 and a "partner" of Antonio Augusto Botelho. See, Sanchez's 'Memo on the Haidee Affair,' in Archibald to Malmesbury, May 3, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA. In 1863, when the slave trade from New York collapsed, Lemos attempted to establish himself in Cuba again. See Dulce to Ministro de Ultramar, Aug. 30, 1863, Ultramar, Leg. 4686, Exp. 52, AHN.

[5] See chapter 2 for more on Cunha Reis's background.

voyages in conjunction with the Portuguese.[6] The Castros were a major force in the Cuban slave trade during the early 1850s. Together, they helped raise slave imports to Trinidad from 1,465 to 2,690 between 1853 and 1854. These numbers represented a small, but growing share of total arrivals to the island; 8 per cent and 18 per cent, respectively.[7]

In the fall of 1853, Castro Jr. met Lemos in New York to plan the latest voyage to Trinidad. One of the first matters at hand was purchasing a vessel. Slave traders had particular preferences, some of which had not changed significantly since the 1830s, when the trade became illegal throughout the Atlantic world. Traffickers continued to favor US ships, for instance, the superior craft built in the Americas. Fast models with barque, brig, brigantine, and schooner rigging still appealed because they quickened crossings and could potentially outrun patrols. On the other hand, the tightening noose of international suppression after 1850 encouraged traffickers to cut costs and use older vessels. During the 1830s and 1840s, slave traders, especially in Cuba, had ordered new vessels built specifically for the trade, often from Baltimore shipyards.[8] After 1850, they shifted to well-worn, cheaper vessels, sourced from the open market in US ports. Another change was scale. In general, traffickers used much larger slavers after 1850 than before. During the 1840s, the average slaver weighed 151 tons, but after 1850, it rose to 234 tons.[9] This trend seems to have

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[6] For more on the Castros, see Gefaturia principal de policía to Gobr Supr Civil, 1 Feb. 1854, Leg. 427, no. 20575, gobierno general, ANC. See also New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957, NARA, M237, Roll 136, List number 112, Year 1854; Meriño Fuentes and Perera Díaz, *Contrabando de bozales*, 165; Ferreira, *Dos Sertões*, 223. For the Castros' involvement in the voyage of *Cobra*, see G. Jose da Silva Correa to Capt Madalena, Aug. 26, 1852, ADM 123/177, TNA. For an introduction to Trinidad and adjacent jurisdictions, see Manuel Moreno Fraginals, *The Sugarmill: The Socioeconomic Complex of Sugar in Cuba, 1760-1860* (Cedric Belfrage trans., New York, NY: Monthly Review Press, 1976), 66-70.

[7] For figures, see *Voyages*, http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/B7dWTyZf.

[8] On the attractions of American sailing vessels as slavers, see Howard I. Chapelle, *History of American Sailing Ships* (New York, 1982), 154-166. On their use in the illegal Cuban and Brazilian trades see Leonardo Marques, *The United States*, 126-184 & Marques, "US Shipbuilding, Atlantic Markets, and the Structures of the Contraband Slave Trade," in *The Rise and Demise of Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Atlantic World*, eds., Philip Misevich and Kristin Mann (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2016), 196-219. For a broader view of the "Golden Era" of American shipbuilding, see William H. Thiesen, *Industrializing American Shipbuilding: The Transformation of Ship Design and Construction, 1820-1920* (Gainsville, Fl: University of Florida Press, 2006), 45-79.

[9] *Voyages*, http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/SlR2peJQ and http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/IpvFNDMF.

been largely a response to the rising profitability of the trade after 1850. Traffickers in big ports such as New York had access to vessels of all sizes, but chose large ones because they could carry more captives and earn larger returns on investment.[10]

Castro and Lemos followed these principles in their selection of the *Julia Moulton*. Built by shipbuilders Tengue and Hall in Newcastle, Maine in 1846, the brig spent seven years taking mid-length journeys from its base in Boston, Massachusetts. The vessel's main trade route ran along the eastern seaboard, around Florida and all the way to New Orleans. Sometimes the brig journeyed to the Caribbean for sugar and molasses. In fact, Castro Jr., who spent much of his time in Havana, may have identified the vessel as a potential slaver during its final sugar run to the colonial capital in December 1853, just before it entered the slave trade. Castro would have noted its qualities. As a brig, the *Julia Moulton* offered considerable sailing speed and good maneuverability, especially in light winds. In addition, at 200 tons, it was big enough to carry a large number of captives, and potentially, bring handsome returns to investors.[11]

Having sourced a vessel, Castro and Lemos sought a crew. There were many roles to fill. The typical midcentury slaver departed the US with a captain, one to three mates, a supercargo, carpenter, cook, boatswain, and around a dozen ordinary hands. Overall, these roles were not markedly different than the legal US slave trade of early nineteenth century.[12] The one major difference was the inclusion of a supercargo, who managed the business of the voyage, especially on the African coast. His role had been common in the South Atlantic trade to Brazil, but rare in the British and North American trades, in which the captain typically transacted business. In most

[10] For more on this point, see Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 127-131.
[11] For the sailing qualities of brigs, see Chapelle, *History*, 159. For the *Julia Moulton*'s non-slaving career, see NY *Evening Post*, Aug. 17, 1846; *Times-Picayune*, Aug. 26, 1846; NY *Evening Post*, Apr. 5, 1848; *Boston Evening Transcript*, Apr. 4, 1851; *Charleston Courier*, July 7, 1851; *Daily Atlas* (Boston), Aug. 5, 1853; *Portland Weekly Advertiser*, Oct. 25, 1853; *Portland Weekly Advertiser*, Dec. 6 & Jan 3, 1854.
[12] Coughtry, *The Notorious Triangle*, 56-7.

midcentury voyages the supercargo was Portuguese or Brazilian. In many cases, he had experience on the African coast, was a confident of the principals, and was an investor in the voyage. Perhaps the most prolific supercargo working out of New York, Antonio Augusto Botelho, possessed all these traits. The inclusion of supercargoes such as Botelho highlights the lusophone character of slave trade shipping and the strength of networks linking the US and the African coast in the final years of the trade.[13]

Overall, slave ship crews were large, but contracting after 1850. Slavers had always required heavy manning compared to vessels in legal commerce, mainly due to concerns about slave revolt. After the voyage, James Smith, who became captain of the *Julia Moulton* noted his vessel could have been "manned by four men" if it had been in legal trade.[14] These crews had grown over time, especially at the turn of the nineteenth century, as slavers and their captive cargos increased in size. By the early 1800s, tiny vessels such as the recently-examined *Hare*, which departed Rhode Island with 6 men in 1755, were a thing of the past.[15] Indeed, between 1808, when the trade became illegal in the US and Britain, and 1849, an average of 23 men were serving aboard slavers. After 1850, this figure fell to 18, despite the fact that vessels were markedly larger and would carry many more captives.[16] The reason for this dip appears to have been that post-1850 vessels carried higher proportions of children, who traffickers did not perceive as threatening

[13] On the role of the supercargo in the Brazilian slave trade, see Miller, *Way of Death*, 371, 389-90. For the joint "seaman and salesman" role of Rhode Island captains during the legal slave trade, see Coughtry, *Notorious*, 51-2. On captains in the British trade, see Stephen D. Behrendt, 'The Captains in the British Slave Trade from 1785 to 1807', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 140 (1990), 79-140; Stephen D. Behrendt, 'Human capital in the British slave trade' in David Richardson, Suzanne Schwarz, and Anthony Tibbles eds. *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), 66-97; and Rediker, *The Slave Ship*, 157-221. For Botelho see chapters 1 & 4.
[14] *New York Evangelist* in *Liberator*, Dec. 15, 1854.
[15] Sean M. Kelley, *The Voyage of the Slave Ship Hare: A Journey into Captivity from Sierra Leone to South Carolina* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016)
[16] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/w7uFkvaL and http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/w6dCfQiH

compared to adults. This trend, explored in more detail later, allowed investors to recruit fewer crew and therefore limit their costs.[17]

The single most striking feature of midcentury crews was not their size, but their cosmopolitanism. The slave trade from North American ports had traditionally been composed of local men. As Jay Coughtry has shown, before US abolition, 95 percent of sailors boarding slavers in Newport were Rhode Islanders.[18] The illegal slave trade, and the final phase, in particular, was much more varied. Naval officers frequently commented on the mix of nationalities they discovered when they captured slavers. One British officer, reporting a capture of the *Abbot Devereux* near Ouidah in 1857 described a "crew of Spaniards, Americans, Portuguese, and Brazilians."[19] The particular blend of these crews depended, in part, on the port of origin. Vessels departing the booming metropolis and immigrant center of New York typically included Americans and Europeans, with at least some Portuguese. Crews on Havana vessels, by contrast, often contained some Portuguese and Americans, but included more Spaniards and Cubans. Ultimately, the diversity of these crews reflected both the broader ranks of the local marine community and the outsized influence of the Portuguese over slave trade shipping after 1850.[20]

The *Julia Moulton* boasted a typically mixed crew. Its captain, James Smith, was born in Hanover, Germany, and was originally named Julius Smidt. After attending navigation school in

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[17] For more on this point, see Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 131-133.

[18] Jay Coughtry, *The Notorious Triangle: Rhode Island and The African Slave Trade, 1700-1807* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1981), 58-9.

[19] Text accompanying 'Capture of a Slave Ship, African Coast,' in *The Atlantic Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Americas: A Visual Record*, University of Virginia, http://slaveryimages.org/details.php?categorynum=5&categoryName=Slave%20Ships%20and%20the%20Atlantic%20Crossing%20(Middle%20Passage)&theRecord=39&recordCount=78. Accessed Mar. 5, 2017.

[20] For the recruitment and composition of captains and crews in the legal slave trade, especially in British ports, see Stephen D. Behrendt, 'The Captains in the British Slave Trade from 1785 to 1807', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 140 (1990), 79-140; Stephen D. Behrendt, 'Human capital in the British slave trade' in David Richardson, Suzanne Schwarz, and Anthony Tibbles eds. *Liverpool and Transatlantic Slavery* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), 66-97; Emma Christopher, *Slave Ship Sailors and Their Captive Cargoes, 1730-1807* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 23-50; Rediker, *The Slave Ship*, 136-142, 222-230. For colonial North America, see Coughtry, *Notorious Triangle*, 45-66, and Kelly, *The Slave Ship Hare*, 36-45.

Hamburg, he immigrated to New York in the 1840s, serving as first mate aboard the ship that carried him to the US. He was 24 years old when he captained the *Julia Moulton*, and spoke English and Portuguese in addition to his native German.[21] The first mate was James Willis, a native of Amsterdam, who had he immigrated to the US in 1847.[22] Willis spoke Dutch, German, a little French, and picked up some Portuguese aboard the *Julia Moulton*. The supercargo was a Portuguese named Vilela. Little else is known about him, except that he was in his twenties and spoke some English.[23] The rest of the crew were even more obscure, but included a second mate named Young; common seamen: George Cooke, William Robinson, Thomas McDermot, John McDonald; two unnamed Portuguese; and Henry Fling, a nineteen-year-old cook and a native of New London, Connecticut.[24] In their totality, this highly variegated mix of Europeans and Americans reflected the broader patterns of illegal slaving crews, particularly those departing from New York.

Lemos and Castro recruited the *Julia Moulton*'s crew through intermediaries. Indirect hiring was common practice in regular trade in big ports such as New York. In most cases, principals hired shipping masters to man their vessels.[25] In the case of the *Julia Moulton*, Lemos and Castro hired William Valentine. A ship-chandler and ship-outfitter by trade, Valentine was a favored middleman for the Portuguese in New York. Smith was his first recruit. Having already captained an illegal slave ship, *The Republic*, in 1853, Smith was well-known to the slave trading

[21] For biographical details on Smith, see trial testimony in *NYH*, Nov. 9, 1854 and *NYT*, Nov. 9, 1854. At 25, Smith was younger than the average slaving captain in the legal slave trades from Rhode Island (32), Liverpool (30), and Bristol (31). Coughtry, *The Notorious Triangle*, 58-60; Behrendt, 'The Captains', 79-140.
[22] For biographical details on Willis, see *NYH*, Nov. 9, 1854 and *NYT*, Nov. 9, 1854.
[23] *NYT*, Dec. 29, 1854. This is the same Vilela mentioned in chapter 2.
[24] *NYH*, Nov. 9, 1854.
[25] Dorothy Denneen Volo and James M. Volo, *Daily Life in the Age of Sail* (Westport, Ct: Greenwood Press, 2002), 93-103.

community and an obvious target.[26] Once Valentine had engaged his captain, the pair worked together. First they approached Willis outside Valentine's store in Lower Manhattan. Willis had never been on a slaving voyage before, but readily accepted the position of first mate. Valentine and Smith then sought out the seamen, including Fling, Cooke, and Robinson. The records do not explain who recruited Vilela and the Portuguese sailors, but this was likely done directly through their fellow Portuguese, Lemos.[27]

Many, if not all, the crew were recruited on the understanding they were going on an illegal slaving voyage. The senior officers and Vilela certainly knew what they were doing; Smith and Willis made no attempt to deny the fact in court. On the other hand, the purpose of the voyage was likely not explained directly to some seamen. After the voyage, Fling testified that Smith had given him the impression they were heading to the Caribbean. Cooke stated that Smith had told him and another seaman, Robinson, that they were heading to the Cape of Good Hope.[28] These claims are difficult to verify, although it was common for slave trade sailors to argue they had been duped into serving aboard slave ships, especially in court. At the very least, the sailors must have questioned the size of the crew. Altogether, Smith and his friends recruited 15 men for the voyage. As Smith later confessed, it was an "almighty crew" for an ostensibly legal voyage.[29]

The main aim of these recruits was to make money. Their wages varied in scale, were somewhat negotiable, and were clearly stratified by rank. They vastly exceeded what crews made

[26] On the *Republic* see, 'Voyages' #46497. On Smith's role in the *Republic*, see *NYT* Feb 8, 1855. For other captains, including Jonathon Dobson, Nathaniel Gordon, and Edward Townsend, who mastered several vessels see the reports of Emilio Sanchez in FO84/1086, /1111, and /1138, TNA.
[27] *NYH*, Nov. 9, 1854, *NYT*, Dec. 2, 1854. *NYT*, Dec. 29, 1854.
[28] *NYH*, Nov. 9, 1854
[29] New York *Evangelist* in *The Liberator*, Dec. 15, 1854. The US consul in Luanda noted that most legal US merchantmen on the African coast had 4 to 6 crewmen and were composed mostly of Americans. John Willis to Sec. of State Marcy, Nov. 16, 1854, Despatches from US Consuls in St. Paul de Loanda, 1854-1893, T430, roll 1, NARA.

in previous generations, when the traffic was less legally risky and much less profitable.[30] Slaving captains were always paid the most. Smith's wages are unknown, but captains were usually paid about $5000. Captain J. W. Delano, for example, accepted that figure to captain the *Braman*, the vessel visited by Whitman in 1855.[31] Other captains bought shares in voyages, a potentially lucrative option given the potential returns. The prolific New York captain Jonathon Dobson, for instance, invested around $3,000 in shares in the voyage of the *Isla de Cuba* in 1858.[32] These large sums reflected the particular risks that captains were taking. In addition to sailing the vessel, which exposed them to capture at sea and prosecution, many captains further exposed themselves by purchasing the slaver on behalf of the principals. In the case of the *Julia Moulton*, Smith travelled to Boston, where the brig was based, bought the vessel, sailed it back to New York, and registered it at the custom house under his own name. In these scenarios, the captain took nearly all the risk; the principals were invisible.[33]

After the captain, the first mate was next on the pay scale. After haggling with Smith, Willis signed up for $40 per month for the outbound voyage to Africa and a flat $2,000 for the return voyage to Cuba.[34] This extraordinary differential took account of risk; being caught with captives was much more incriminating, and therefore more dangerous, than being caught without them. It also encouraged Willis to stay the course. Smith made the point when Willis requested the $2,000 upfront. Smith's reply, paraphrased by Willis, was that "this was not customary, as I might change my mind when I get to Africa."[35] The same principle applied to the other crew. Smith, having

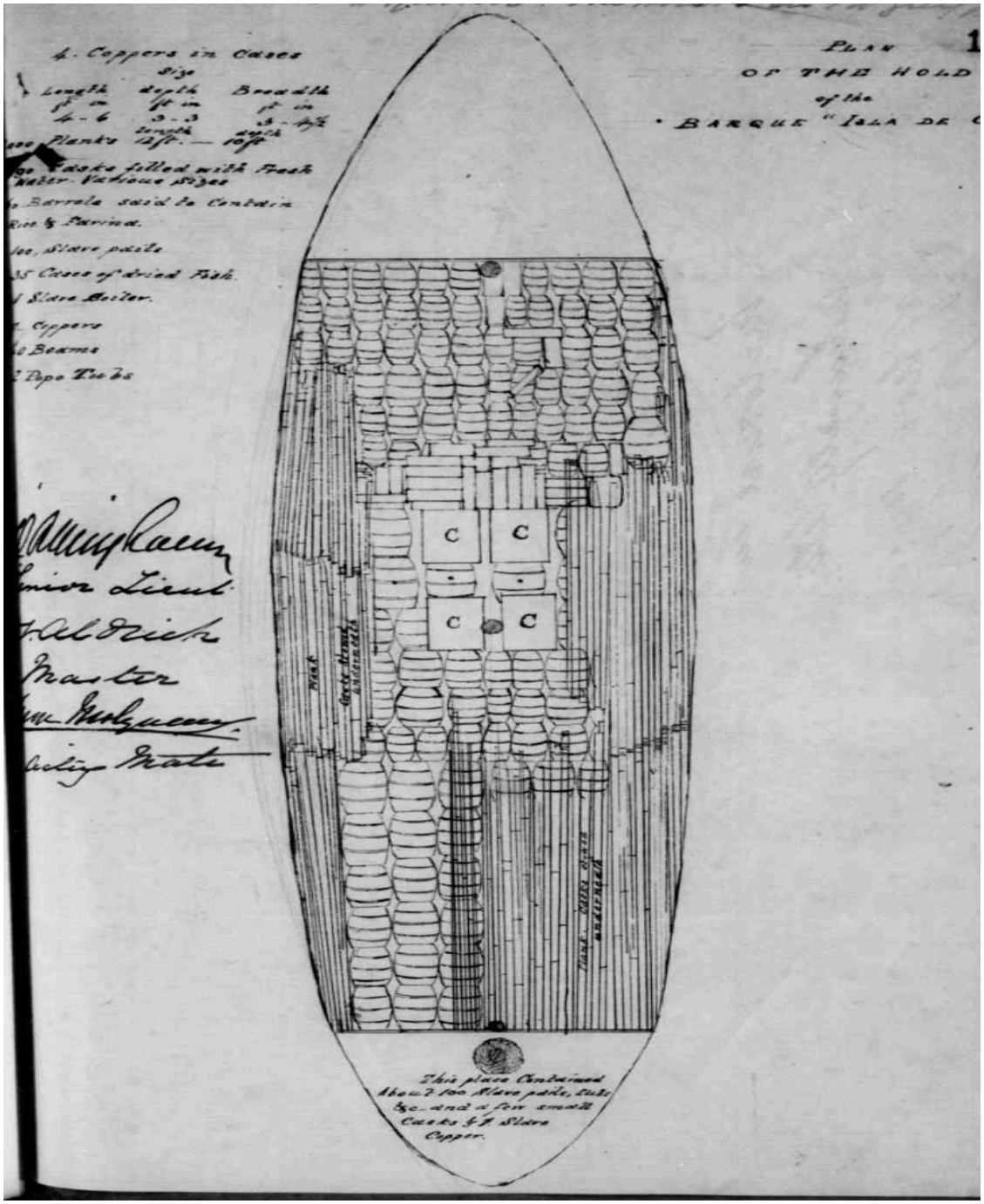
[30] Stephen D. Behrendt, 'Human capital', 66-97; Coughtry, *Notorious*, 66-70.
[31] *NY Daily Tribune*, July 15, 1856.
[32] See Sanchez's Memo on *Panchita*, Apr. 5, 1859, FO84/1086. Smith also had the chance to purchase slaves on the African coast and sell them in Cuba on his own account in Cuba. The opportunity to invest in the 'cargo' in this way was generally limited to officers and though it was never as lucrative as investing in the 'ship,' it was still potentially highly remunerative. For Smith's purchase of a young boy in Africa, see, *NYT*, Nov. 7, 1854.
[33] *NYT*, Feb 9, 1854.
[34] *NYT*, Nov. 7, 1854.
[35] *NYT*, Nov. 7, 1854.

agreed to pay the cook, Henry Fling, $13 per month for the fictional legal voyage to West Indies, gave him $340 in gold pieces on the African coast, just before they departed for Cuba. At this point, he also promised to pay the crews' passages back to the US from Cuba, after the voyage had been completed.[36]

With the vessel and crew secured, Lemos and Castro outfitted the *Julia Moulton* for its transatlantic voyage. The outfit was strongly shaped by suppression. Unlike legal slaving voyages, midcentury slavers could not afford to carry obvious slaving equipment such as shackles or chains. In most cases, they also dispensed with trading cargos since suppression necessitated short stays on the African coast and quick loading, rather than protracted bargaining. Fast turnarounds also meant there was little time to purchase or load provisions for the middle passage. As a result, illegal slavers often brought large stores of food and water from their port of departure. A final distinction was the vast quantities of lumber. Since it was far too risky to build a slave deck before leaving port, traffickers brought long planks and scantlings to construct it on the outward passage. Lemos and Castro equipped the *Julia Moulton* on these principles, drawing on New York's vast resources. They bought 72 casks and had them filled with water and placed in the brig's hold. They also sent 4 barrels of wine and rum, 70 of beans, 30 of flour, 8 of pork, 2 of beef, 10 of rice, and 14 barrels of pails from which captives would eat using wooden spoons. In addition, the vessel contained scantlings and planks for the construction of a slave deck, as well as three medicine chests to be used for sickly captives and crew. The brig also shipped at least some firearms, maps and charts, as well as a chronometer that permitted Smith to accurately tell the vessel's longitude during the voyage. Finally, the vessel probably carried large boilers, which were necessary for cooking large quantities for food and common in the midcentury trade. In the words of District

[36] *NYH*, Nov. 9, 1854; *NYT*, Nov. 7, 1854. For a comparison between slave ship officers' and seamen's wages in the legal British and American slave trades, see Christopher, *Slave Ship Sailors*, 23-50; Kelly, *The Slave Ship Hare*, 39.

Figure 3.2. *"Plan of the Hold of the barque Isla de Cuba*"
Note the four coppers or boilers, marked 'C', the barrels containing food and water, and the loose lumber for the slave deck.



Source: TNA

Attorney John McKeon, who prosecuted Smith after the voyage, the brig "had on board everything necessary to fit her at sea for the transportation of slaves."[37] The vessel would have looked much like the slaver *Isla de Cuba*, which was captured without slaves and sketched by a British naval officer in 1858 (see Figure 3.2).

The final step was clearing the vessel from port. Smith, who was not only the captain of the vessel, but also, ostensibly, its owner, went to New York's Custom House to clear the vessel himself. He handed over ship's manifest, which listed only the food and an oblique reference to woodenware. He also took oaths that he was an American citizen and the true owner of the vessel, thereby earning the vessel the right to fly the US flag, which, theoretically, protected the voyage from British interference. Smith further claimed he was going on a legal voyage to Cape Town, a less conspicuous choice than West Central Africa.[38] All of these falsehoods proved satisfactory to the clearance clerk, who approved the *Julia Moulton*'s departure, apparently, without reservation. Wasting little time, the crew piled aboard the brig. The next morning, Lemos and Castro gathered at a Manhattan wharf. They watched as *Julia Moulton* sailed down the East River, towards the Atlantic Ocean.[39]

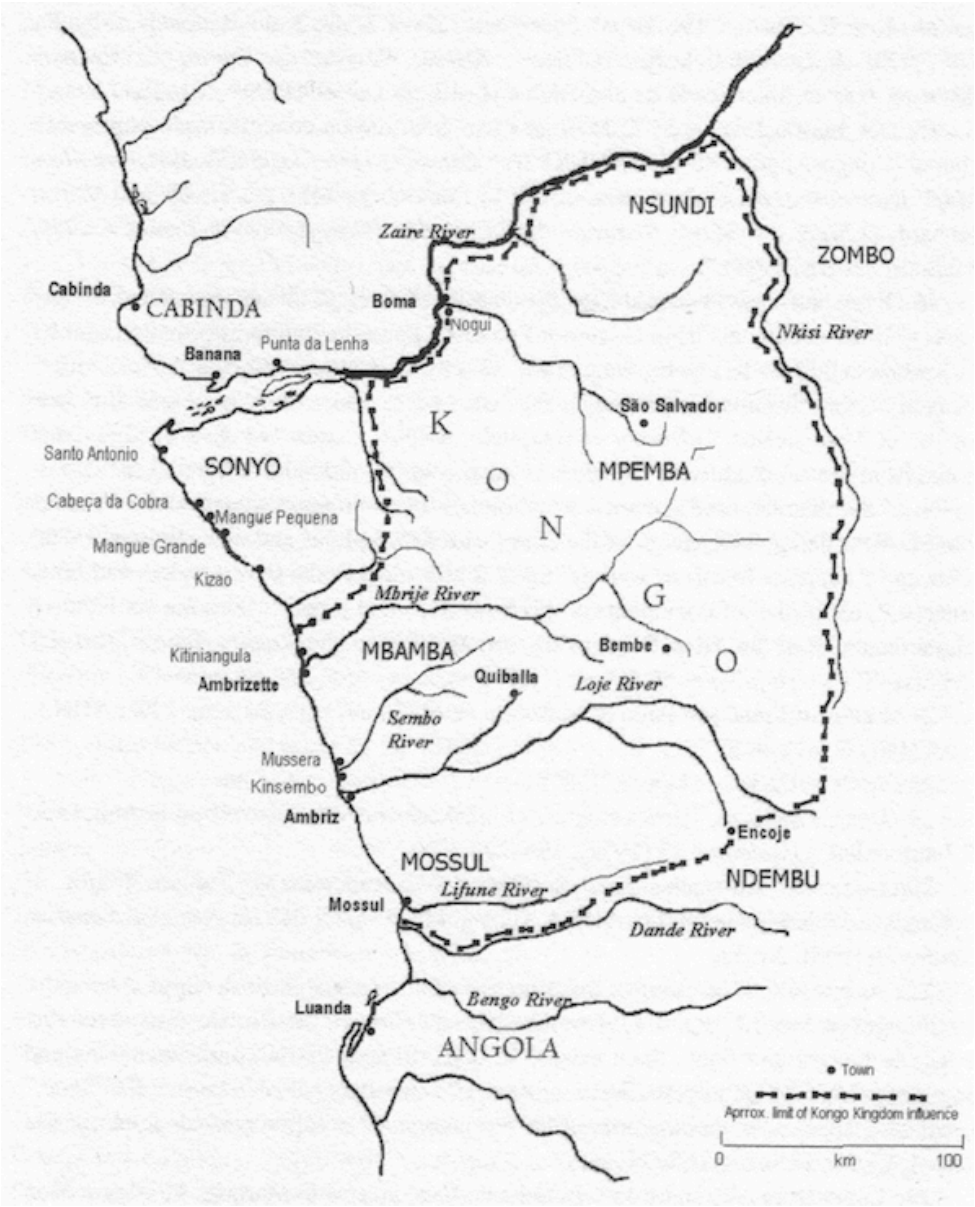
Midcentury Captives

During the next 65 days, the *Julia Moulton* journeyed to Africa. Tracking prevailing winds and Ocean currents, the brig followed a clockwise arc around the North Atlantic before dipping down to the Cape Verde Islands and the continental mainland. Aboard the vessel, the crew were busy refitting. Forty days into the voyage, they began laying lumber over the casks in the hold, making

[37] *NYT*, Nov. 7, 1854; *NYH*, Nov. 9, 1854.
[38] *NYT*, Nov. 7, 1854, *NYT*, Feb 13, 1854.
[39] *NYH*, Nov. 9, 1854.

a crude slave deck for the middle passage. They also fixed gratings to the hatchways on the main deck, creating a prison for captives below. Finally, they hung an awning between the main mast and the galley door to shield the deck and its occupants from the equatorial sun. The *Julia Moulton* was now ready to receive it captives.[40]

Figure 3.3. *Northern West Central Africa, c.1870* [*]



[40] *NYH*, Nov. 9, 1854.

[*] From Herlin, "Brazil and the Commercialization of Kongo", 260

By the time these preparations were complete, the slaver was nearing West Central Africa. The traffic had come under attack in this region by the Portuguese and British in the late 1840s and early 1850s, but remained robust, thanks partly to imperial tension between the two powers in the Lower Congo and Loango Coast as well as to support from African societies that remained deeply attached to the trade and worked with coastal traffickers.[41] By the 1850s, many Brazilian and Portuguese slave traders, including Guilherme Correia, who had moved their operations to the Lower Congo River basin. They developed important slave exportation points at Ambriz and Ambrizette, which lay to the south of the Congo River; Cabeça de Cobra, near its mouth; and Cabinda on the Loango Coast. Some captives also embarked incoming slavers at remote beaches or even in the Congo River itself (see Figure 3.3).[42]

The slave trade from these and other minor exportation points in Angola dominated the midcentury slave trade on the African coast. As Table 3.1 shows, around 156,000 captives boarded slave ships on the coasts of West Central Africa between 1851 and 1866. This figure accounted for almost seventy percent of all captives – two in every three – who boarded slave ships during this period; up from forty six percent during the entire history of the trade.[43] The other main

[41] For these tensions, see FO 96/31/4, FO 881/553, TNA. Also, see Roger Anstey, *Britain and the Congo in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Macmillan, 1962); Ferreira, Roquinaldo, 'The conquest of Ambriz: Colonial expansion and imperial competition in Central Africa' *Mulemba: Revista Angolana de Ciências Sociais*, 5, no. 9 (May 2015): 221-242; Martin, *The External Trade*, 147-8.

[42] Roquinaldo Ferreira, 'The suppression of the slave trade and slave departures from Angola, 1830s-1860s', in Eltis and Richardson, *Extending*, 313-34. Roquinaldo Ferreira, *A Transnational History of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in Central Africa* (Forthcoming, 2017, CUP).

[43] http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/kcggRPA5. Martin, Phyllis. *The External Trade of the Loango Coast 1576-1870: The Effects of Changing Commercial Relations on the Vili Kingdom of Loango* (Oxford University Press 1972); Miller, Joseph. *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988); Candido, Mariana. *An African Slaving Port and the Atlantic World: Benguela and Its Hinterland* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Robert Harms, *River of Wealth, River of Sorrow: The Central Zaire Basin in the era of the slave and ivory trade, 1500-1891* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1981); Susan J. Herlin, "Brazil and the Commercialization of the Kongo, 1840-1870" in José C. Curto and Paul Lovejoy, *Enslaving Connections: Changing Cultures of Africa and Brazil During the Era of Slavery* (Humanity Books, 2003), 260-283.

exportation regions after 1850 – the Bight of Benin, and South-east Africa – fell far behind; accounting for 15 and 13 percent respectively.

Table 3.1. *African Embarkation Zones, 1851-1866*

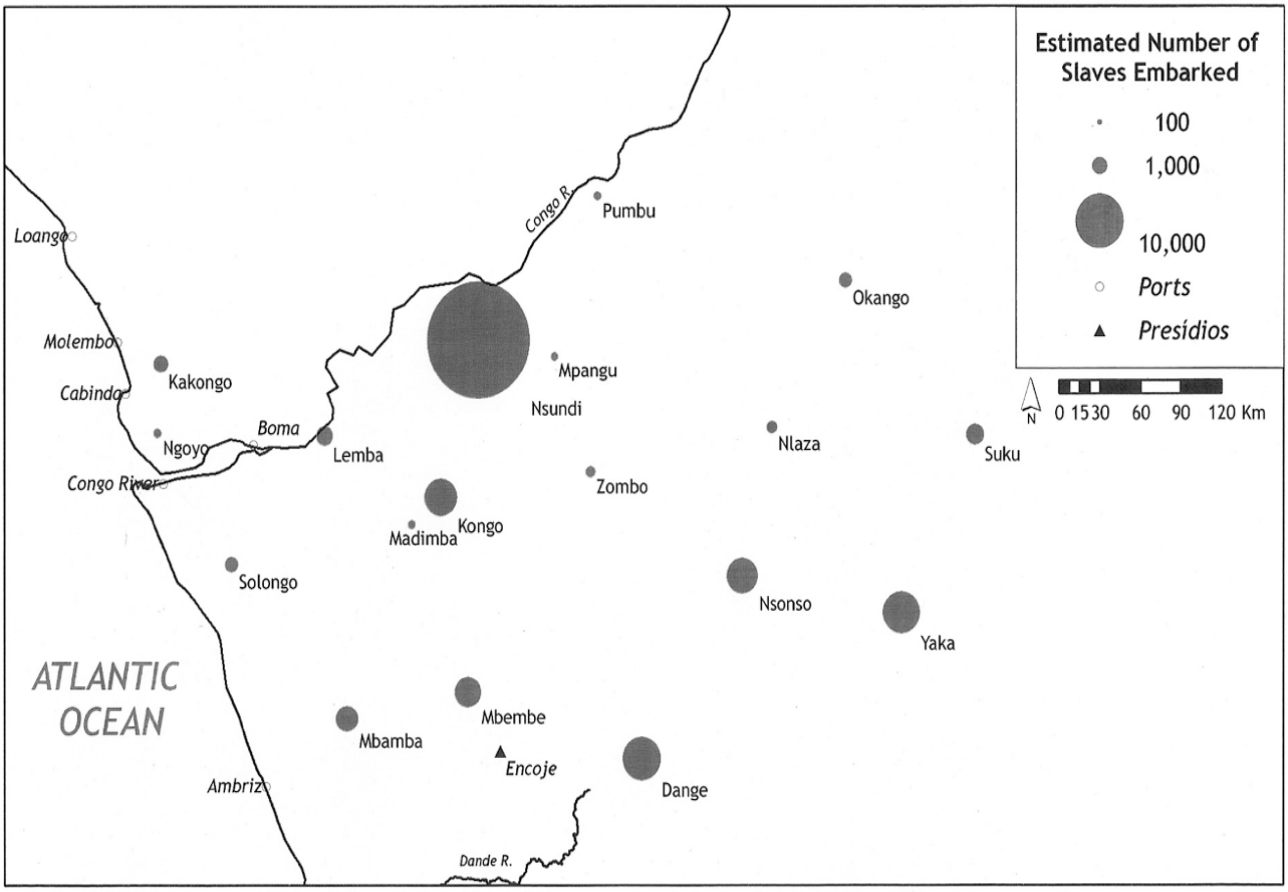
Embarkation region	**Total no. Captives**	**Percentage of Total**
Sierra Leone	4,795	2.1
Bight of Benin	33,867	15
West Central Africa	156,779	69.5
South-east Africa and Indian Ocean islands	30,166	13.4
	225,607	100

Source: 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/kcggRPA5.
Two captives embarked in the Bight of Biafra, but are not included in this table.

Slave traders in the interior of West Central Africa forced these captives to the shore. Historian Daniel Domingues da Silva has performed the most in-depth research on the origins of captives departing this region in the nineteenth century. Using records of West Central Africans intercepted by the British and Portuguese authorities, Domingues contends that most captives embarking from this region between 1831 and 1855 originated less than 400 km inland, a distance considerably shorter than historians have traditionally associated with the region's supply lines. Figure 3.4, which is replicated from Domingues' work, identifies the origination points. As the map indicates, almost all captives came from the South side of the Congo River. All belonged to the Kikongo linguistic group, which dominated the immediate interior. Although their ethnicities were diverse, a large majority were Nsundi and were connected to the Kingdom of Kongo, which lay close to the south bank of the Congo River.[44]

[44] Domingues, "Crossroads" 90-116.

Figure 3.4. *Estimated Number of Kikongo Slaves leaving West Central Africa, 1831-1855*[*]



Most of these captives were sent into the slave trade from their own societies, rather than through warfare or kidnapping, which had been common throughout the traffic for centuries. According to historian Norm Schrag, legal systems in the key provenance zone of Kingdom of Kongo were increasingly corrupted in the nineteenth century to accommodate the slave trade. Gradually, he contends, lineage heads began selling peoples who were previously considered ineligible for export, including free men and slaves who had already been assimilated into

[*] From Domingues, "Crossroads" 108.

lineages.[45] Another historian, Jelmer Vos, has found similar patterns in his analysis of West Central Africans purchased by the French in the 1850s. This French emigration scheme, which was ostensibly designed to supply the Antilles with 'free' laborers, was small in scale and lasted for only a few years, but drew on the same interior sources as the slave trade. According to Vos, many captives entering this traffic were originally sold for what were previously considered "misdemeanors" in their societies, such theft or sexual misconduct. In many cases, they were expelled by kin without committing a crime at all.[46]

The demographic profile of these midcentury captives skewed young and male. According to Domingues, the proportion of children departing West Central Africa rose dramatically from 15 percent to 53 percent between 1806-1830 and 1831-1855. Between 1856 and 1867 the proportion dipped to 36 percent, although this figure should be treated cautiously since there are only a handful of cases.[47] The proportion of males was also rising. According to Domingues, the percentage of males departing West Central African ports rose from 63 percent to 74 percent between 1806-1830 and 1831-1867. Among embarkations in northern West Central Africa, the proportion of males was even higher; 81 percent, compared to 76 percent at Luanda, and 62 percent from southern ports between 1831 and 1855.[48]

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[45] Norm Schrag, "Mboma and the Lower Zaire: a Socioeconomic Study of a Kongo Trading Community, c.1785-1885" (Ph.D., Bloomington: Indiana University, 1985)

[46] Vos, Jelmer. '"Without the Slave Trade, No Recruitment": From Slave Trading to 'Migrant Recruitment' in the Lower Congo, 1830-90,' Benjamin N. Lawrance and Richard L. Roberts eds. *Trafficking in Slavery's Wake: Law and the Experience of Women and Children* (Athens, GA: Ohio University Press, 2012), 45-64. For British officer, Richard Burton's assessment of the French emigration scheme in 1863, see FO 881/1294, TNA.

[47] Domingues, "Crossroads", 139-40. For a discussion of the methodological complications created by the term 'children', especially in the West Central African context, see Domingues, "Crossroads", 132-7. For children in the eighteenth-century slave trades, see Sowande' M. Mustakeem*, Slavery at Sea: Terror, Sex, and Sickness in the Middle Passage* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2016), 167-9. For a broader look at child slavery, see Anna Mae Duane ed. *Child Slavery Before and Africa Emancipation: An Argument for Child-Centered Slavery Studies* (forthcoming, 2017, Cambridge University Press)

[48] Domingues, "Crossroads", 127-128.

The demographic changes of West Central African captives can partly be explained by regional factors.[49] The rising proportion of men, Domingues has argued, was largely due to the fact that the societies supplying increasing proportions of slaves were matrilineal. In these communities, retaining female, rather than male, slaves was an important way of holding and increasing wealth and status.[50] Women were also highly valued because they took a leading role in labor, especially in relation to food production. João Monteiro, a Portuguese traveler who visited Boma, on the Lower Congo River, in 1876, noted the gendered labor distinctions. "[A] male slave," he wrote, "cannot be made by his master to cultivate the ground, which is women's work, and the mistress and her slaves till the ground together."[51] The rising proportion of children, on the other hand, can perhaps be explained by changing norms governing eligibility for exportation in states such as Kongo. Children, who maintained lowly status with kinship groups, would have been particularly vulnerable to sale.

Slave trade suppression was a second, and perhaps more important, factor. If an analysis of demographic data is expanded to the entire African continent, a revealing uniformity emerges: in each exportation region – from Senegambia to South East Africa – the number of child-captives doubled between the early and mid-nineteenth centuries.[52] Although local and regional African factors likely shaped the exact demographics of captives departing each zone, the uniform increase across each of these culturally distinct regions suggests the broader influence of suppression. One of these influences was an overall decline in slave exports, which would likely have overloaded

[49] Most scholars have roundly dismissed American explanations. In general, Brazilian and Cuban planters valued adults more than children. Reproductive females were in unusually high demand due to the imminent threats of slave trade suppression. For on this discussion, see Domingues, "Crossroads",
[50] Domingues, "Crossroads", 130-1.
[51] Monteiro, *Angola*, 33; Domingues, "Crossroads", 128-130. For the powerful influence of gendered understandings of labor on the slave trade from the Bight of Biafra, see, G. Ugo Nwokeji, *The Slave Trade and Culture in the Bight of Biafra: An African Society in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).
[52] Eltis and Richardson, *Atlas*, 166.

internal slave markets, leaving children particularly vulnerable to exportation. Suppression also created practical slave trading reasons for enslaving children. As historian Benjamin Lawrence has noted, enslaved African children were more "coercible" than adults.[53] As a result, traffickers were able to move them more easily along the coast and onto the slave ship, an imperative in an era of coastal patrols. Furthermore, traffickers likely welcomed children aboard their vessels because they did not require shackling, meaning the ship could dispense with the tell-tale slaving equipment.

Information on the origins and demographic profiles of the *Julia Moulton* captives is limited, but they appear to have fit within broader patterns. No records identify exactly where they entered the slave trade, but their coastal embarkation point, Ambrizette, offers a basic guide. Located on the coast between Ambriz and the Congo River, Ambrizette was closely tied to the supply zones of northern West Central Africa. It is therefore likely that many of the captives came from the Kingdom on Kongo, the chief source of captives during this period, and that many were Nsundi. Almost all of the captives would have been members of the Kikongo linguistic group and could therefore have communicated with each other in some form during their ordeal.

The demographics of the captives are more certain. In total, 664 captives boarded the *Julia Moulton* in April 1854, a large figure that will be examined more closely in the next section. After the voyage, sailor Henry Fling recalled that among the 664, there were "40 women, the rest were men and boys."[54] Fling did not mention girls, perhaps counting them among the "40 women." If so, females formed only 6 percent of captives who boarded the *Julia Moulton* at Ambrizette. Although females typically formed a minority of captives in the nineteenth century, this proportion

[53] Benjamin N. Lawrence, *Amistad's Orphans: An Atlantic Story of Children, Slavery, and Smuggling* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 36-7.
[54] *NYH*, Nov. 9, 1854

was particularly low. Only one other voyage after 1850 carried less than 10 percent females – the *Zeldina*, which departed the Loango Coast in late February 1857.[55] One possible explanation is seasonality. In Kikongo territories, January to April marked the beginning and end of an agricultural cycle. Since the *Julia Moulton* arrived on the coast in April, inland slave traders may have preferred to retain women to gather the harvest rather than send them to export markets.[56]

Although the proportion of children who ended up aboard the *Julia Moulton* is not revealed in the sources, the distribution of captives around the brig suggests it was within the common 30 to 50 percent range. According to Smith, he and the crew put the "boys and women" above deck, while they put the "men" below. It is unclear how Smith defined "boys", but if children had formed a majority of captives, the traffickers would likely have put some of the "boys" in the hold, leaving more space on deck. On the other hand, the space limitations of the hold suggest there were more than a just a few children. If there had been a very small number of children, the slave deck would have struggled to accommodate the remaining 500 or so adult males, notwithstanding the 'tight packing' aboard illegal slavers.

These largely male and young captives likely journeyed from the interior on foot and by water. Having been sold to external markets they would have come under the authority of *pombeiros*, itinerant traders who brought goods to the interior and sold slaves to the coast. Using the natural aid of the Congo River, *pombeiros* brought many of the region's captives to the coast in dug-out canoes.[57] Heading downstream, many slaves arrived at Boma, the main slave market

[55] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/mHdx88LY. Zeldina # 4229, carried 91 percent males.
[56] For seasons, see Domingues, 'Crossroads' 85-7. For the influence of seasons on the trade see, Stephen D. Behrendt, 'Ecology, Seasonality and the Transatlantic Slave Trade,' in Bernard Bailyn and Patricia L. Denault, eds., *Soundings in Atlantic History: Latent Structures and Intellectual Currents, 1500-1830* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2009), 44-85.
[57] On transporters and caravans, see Miller, *Way of Death*, 189-206. David Livingstone identified transporters in northern Angola as *carregadores*. See David Livingstone to Edmund Gabriel, Oct. 28, 1854, Add. MS. 37410, British Library.

on the Congo. Laying 50 miles from the coast, Boma was the gateway to the Atlantic Ocean. The slave market at Boma was controlled by powerful rulers who levied fees on slave sales and captives passing through their jurisdiction.[58] As they journeyed through the town, perhaps having been separated from kin, the captives would have journeyed towards the mouth of the Congo. Here the path split in several directions. Some captives remained on the lower reaches of the River, where slavers increasingly embarked their captives in the late 1850s and early 1860s. Others were transported by boat, out into the Atlantic and around the coast to embarkation points at Ambrizette, Ambriz, or the Loango Coast. Still others travelled to these places by land or via the Lower Congo's dense network of creeks.[59]

When captives neared the coast, they entered ramshackle pens known as 'factories' or barracoons while they awaited shipment. Andrew Wilson, an American sailor who deserted the slave ship *Mary E. Smith* in 1855, spent two and a half months at a barracoon near Cape Padron, at mouth of the Congo. The captives, he observed, were "kept chained in gangs of from eight to twelve" and branded on the chest, arm, back or thighs a few days after they arrived. Adding to the brutality of this scene, Wilson said the superintendent at his barracoon, "went heavily armed, and … shot one negro dead for disobedience of his orders."[60] Slave traders described similarly violent episodes in their correspondence. After one voyage in 1856, a West Central African trafficker, João Soares, wrote to a 'cargo' investor, Bento Pacheco dos Santos, informing him that "one [of

[58] On Boma, see Schrag, "Mboma", 62-5. For British descriptions of Boma, see FO 925/488&489, FO 881/1294, TNA.
[59] For these routes, see FO 881/1294, TNA. For routes in eighteenth century West Central Africa, see Joseph C. Miller, 'The Numbers, Origins, and Destinations of Slaves in the Eighteenth Century Angolan Slave Trade,' in Joseph E. Inikori and Stanley L. Engerman, eds. *The Atlantic Slave Trade: Effects on Economies, Societies, and Peoples in Africa, the Americas, and Europe* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1992)
[60] *NYT*, June 28, 1856.

his slaves] came off from the shore dead from blows given by [another trafficker,] Luiz, on the eve of embarking, so that on board he was never able to rise."[61]

When the coast was clear of cruisers and it was finally time to board, a fast loading process began. The threat of capture encouraged slave traders to embark captives as quickly as possible; often within a few hours. By contrast, in the legal slave trade, captives often boarded over several months and even in different locations along the coast. As in previous eras, the transfer of captives from the shore was typically conducted by local boatmen. Hired by coastal agents such as Cunha Reis, they were knowledgeable about the local surf and could transfer the captives quickly. In the case of the *Julia Moulton*, the boatmen of Ambrizette delivered the captives to the brig, a mile offshore, by dugout canoe and lighter. The process was probably a more chaotic version of Figure 3.5, which depicts Ambrizette boatmen transferring men from British cruisers back to their ship in 1855. In the case of the *Julia Moulton*, when the captives arrived, Smith and Willis hauled them up ladders and aboard the brig. The whole process lasted about two or three hours.[62]

Figure 3.5. *"Kroo-canoe going over the surf at Ambrizette, W. C. Africa" July 15, 1855, NMM.*

[61] João Soares, May 20, 1856, enc. in John O'Sullivan to Lewis Cass, Mar. 28, 1857, SDR, NARA.
[62] *NYH*, Nov. 9, 1854. Speed also made loading more dangerous for captives. See, Manning, *Six Years*, 51-5. For rough surf around the equator, see Andrew Hull Foote, *Africa and the American Flag* (New York: NY, D. Appleton & Co., 1854), 282.

Captive Africans were not the only people to board illegal slavers on the coast. Jurisdictional disputes and confusion between suppression powers occasionally led to the capture and release of slave trade crews during the nineteenth century. In late 1853, for instance, the American cruiser USS *Perry* had captured the New York schooner *Glamorgan*, near Ambriz. The captain of the *Perry*, Lieutenant Richard Page, had sent the *Glamorgan*'s American captain to the US for trial, but uncertain about American jurisdiction over the foreigners among the crew, he had released five Portuguese sailors on the shore. The Portuguese had subsequently taken refuge on the shore, perhaps with Cunha Reis. The stranded sailors eventually found a path home, however, when the *Julia Moulton* appeared at Ambrizette, a few months later. In exchange for the journey back to the Americas, they agreed to serve aboard the brig, thereby bolstering its crew to 23.[63]

With the arrival of the Portuguese sailors, the brig was fully populated. Despite the evidentiary limits, the overall picture of its occupants is relatively clear. Following the main patterns of the age, the captives came from several hundred miles of West Central Africa's northern coast and belonged to the Kikongo linguistic group. There were more children and males than previous eras, even during earlier decades of the illegal slave trade. When these captives boarded the *Julia Moulton*, they came under the authority of a diverse group of slave traders born in the US, Portugal, Germany, and the Netherlands. With the addition of reinforcements from the African coast, the crew was much larger than was common during the legal era and slightly larger than the average midcentury crew. In total, there were 685 people aboard the vessel. Now, they raced away from shore and into the Atlantic Ocean.

[63] *NYT*, Dec. 2, 1854; *NYT*, Jan 26, 1855. For the *Glamorgan*, see 'Voyages' #4924. For jurisdictional issues over sailors on captured slavers, see Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic*, 175.

Illegal Middle Passages

After captives boarded illegal slavers, crews forced them into position around the ship. In general, the distribution of captives was not strongly influenced by traffickers' wishes to keep captives out of sight, hidden from the prying eyes of naval officers and their crews. In fact, the distribution largely mirrored patterns from the legal slave trade, in which many captives were always positioned below deck and others were sometimes found above. On the illegal slaver *Echo* in 1858, all captives were confined below the deck, with the men imprisoned in one hold and the women and children in another.[64] Aboard other vessels, captives were located both above and below the deck. On the *Julia Moulton*, Henry Fling later recalled: "the women and boys were put on deck, and the men were passed below."[65] Similarly, on the *Thomas Acorn*, in 1860, the men were confined to the hold, while the women were held above in a poop-deck.[66] In 1854, the crew of the *Grey Eagle* put the children in the vessel's long boat, which sat on the deck hatch.[67] Captives could therefore often be found both above and below the deck; the only rule was that men remained below.

Slave traders' longstanding concerns about security and space determined these patterns rather than special concerns about cruisers. The placement of men below deck was a security measure, both before and after abolition. Captain Smith described the rationale: "The boys and women we kept on the upper deck. But all that strong men-those giant Africans that might make us trouble-we put below on the slave deck."[68] Underscoring his concerns, Smith also had the *Julia Moulton*'s crew secure the hatches on the main deck so "that a man could not crawl up through the

[64] John A. E. Harris, "An Argument", 20-1.
[65] NYH, Nov. 9, 1854. For another example, the *Altivie*, see, *NYT*, June 28, 1856.
[66] Manning, *Six Months*, 55.
[67] Joseph Town in George B. Matthew to Lord Clarendon, Aug. 20, 1854, FO84/948, TNA.
[68] NY *Evangelist* in *The Liberator*, Dec. 15, 1854.

open places."[69] At the same time, the distribution of captives on all slavers was influenced by the availability of space. Slave ships came in various shapes and sizes, and captives varied by age and sex. Although men always remained below, the precise location of women and children varied according to these variables. Holds, cabins, and long boats were all possibilities.

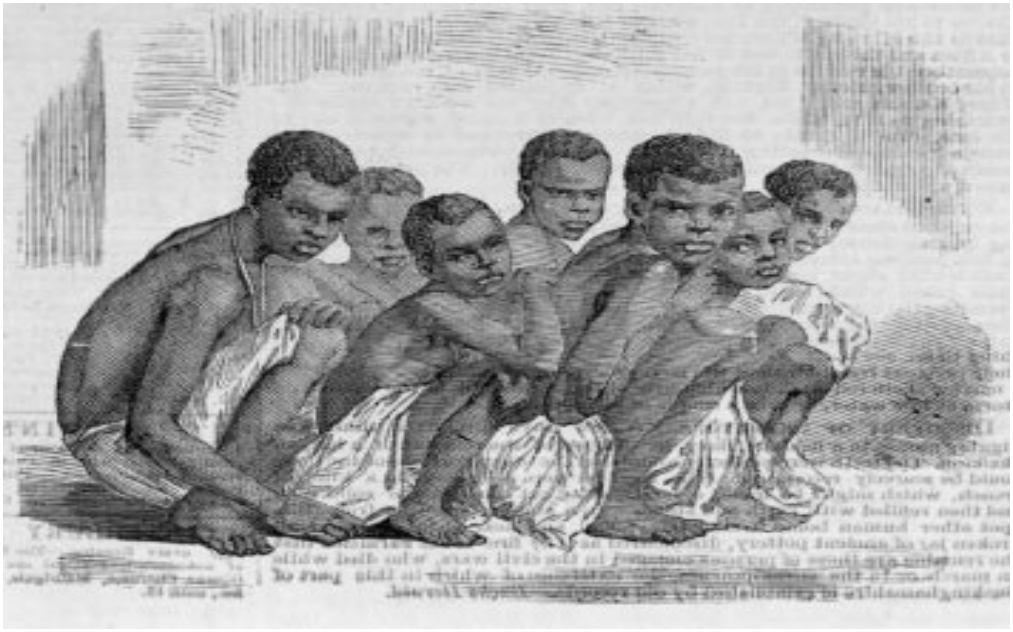
Nevertheless, suppression did alter the occupation of space *during* voyages. Many illegal slave traders opted to keep captives below deck while they were near the African coast and in the Caribbean, where cruisers were also active. Then, when the slaver was in open water, they would bring the captives above. In the early twentieth century, Cudjo Lewis, who had been a captive aboard the *Clotilda* in 1860, said that slaves aboard his vessel were kept below for thirteen days after leaving the Bight of Benin, but thereafter spent much time on deck.[70] At the same time, crews also moved captives in the opposite direction, often at short notice, to avoid detection. After his voyage aboard the *Grey Eagle*, 17-year-old sailor Joseph Town recalled that during a chase, the crew took the women and children from the deck "so they might not be seen."[71] According to Smith, his own approach in such a scenario was to "put them all below deck, and nail down our hatches."[72]

Traffickers packed captives into horribly tight spaces aboard illegal slavers, especially beneath the deck. Henry Fling and Captain Smith explained the 'spoon' formation aboard the *Julia Moulton*. "In the day time we had them sitting on each other's legs[,]" Fling recalled.[73] At night, Smith added, "they lie down upon the deck, on their sides, body to body."[74] This pattern, depicted in Figure 3.6, was common on midcentury slavers. Edward Manning, who had been a sailor aboard

[69] Ibid.
[70] Diouf, *Dreams*, 63.
[71] Joseph Town in George B. Matthew to Lord Clarendon, Aug. 20, 1854, FO84/948, TNA.
[72] NY *Evangelist* in *The Liberator*, Dec. 15, 1854.
[73] *NYH*, Nov. 9, 1854
[74] NY *Evangelist* in *The Liberator*, Dec. 15, 1854.

the *Thomas Acorn*, described the same formation: "Commencing forward, we made the first man lie down … the knees slightly drawn toward the chin. Another one was placed alongside with his breast touching the back of the first and his knees bent at a similar angle. In this manner we stowed them, in tiers, the length and width of the hold."[75]

Figure 3.6. *"Slaves packed below and on deck." Illustrated London News*, June 20, 1857

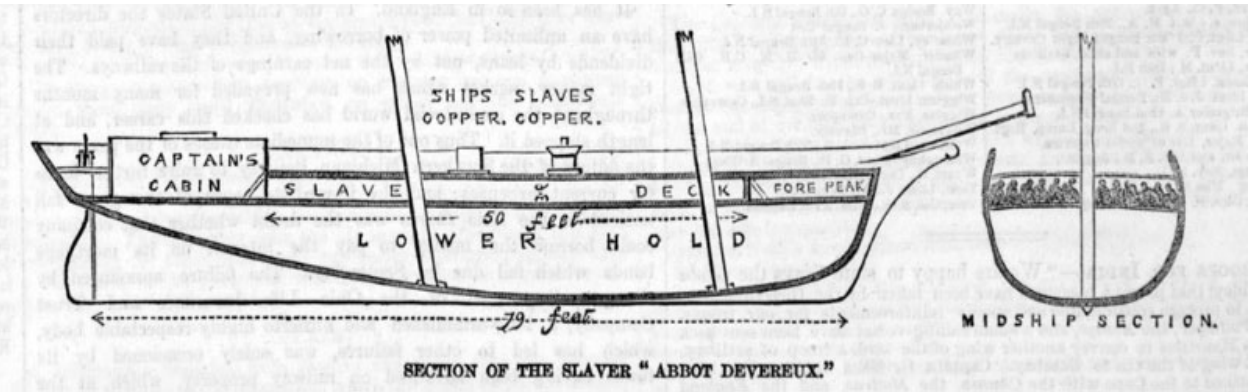


The dimensions of the *Julia Moulton* suggest its men were terribly confined beneath the deck. At its largest extent, the vessel measured 92'10" in length and 24' in breadth.[76] Multiplying these figures gives a rough square footage of the main deck: 2208 sq. ft. Given the inward curve of the vessel, the slave deck of *Julia Moulton* would have been smaller; perhaps around 2000 sq. ft. The number of captives occupying this space was probably close to 400, given that there were 624 males and taking into account the likely proportion of children (around 35 percent). When the number of men is divided into the available space, the result, 5 sq. ft., is a rough estimation of the horizontal space afforded each man under the deck. The height, or headspace, in the hold is more

[75] Manning, *Six Months*, 71.
[76] *NYT*, Nov. 7, 1854.

difficult to estimate. The *Julia Moulton*'s hold measured 10' from top to bottom.[77] Casks containing provisions lay at its base, with the slave deck positioned somewhere above. The traffickers would likely have left themselves adequate room to gain access to the provisions, meaning the slave deck was probably located close to the main deck. The observations of George McHenry, a British doctor, offers a guide. McHenry encountered many midcentury slavers while he lived in the South Atlantic island of St. Helena. In 1862, he summarized what he had seen of their holds: "the space between the water-barrels and the deck [does not] exceed four feet." "The slaves," he added, "unable to stand erect, or even to sit upright are compelled to preserve continually a recumbent position."[78] A British officer who seized the *Abbot Devereux* off Ouidah in 1857, offered a similar assessment. In this case, he said, the slave deck was 3' 6" in height, "just room enough, to clear the top of [the slaves'] heads when they are in a sitting position."[79] A depiction of this slaver, showing the cramped conditions of the its captives, was subsequently published in the *Illustrated London News* (see Figure 3.7).

Figure 3.7. *"Sections of the slaver 'Abbot Devereux." Illustrated London News*, Sept. 19, 1857



SECTION OF THE SLAVER "ABBOT DEVEREUX."

[77] *NYT*, Nov. 7, 1854.
[78] George McHenry, *Visits to Slave-Ships*, published as a pamphlet by the British and Foreign Antislavery Society, 1863.
[79] Text accompanying 'Capture of a Slave Ship, African Coast,' in *The Atlantic Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Americas: A Visual Record*, University of Virginia, http://slaveryimages.org/details.php?categorynum=5&categoryName=Slave%20Ships%20and%20the%20Atlantic%20Crossing%20(Middle%20Passage)&theRecord=39&recordCount=78. Accessed Mar. 5, 2017.

Did captives face 'tighter packing' aboard illegal slavers compared to legal ones? Evidence from the *Julia Moulton*, McHenry, and the British officer, albeit roughly calculated and limited in scope, supports this supposition, at least in the hold. In his study of Liverpool slave ships between 1782 and 1807, Nicholas Radburn has shown that captives occupied an average horizontal space of between 5 and 9 sq. ft.[80] This range compares favorably to the 5 sq. ft. for the *Julia Moulton*. Radburn also found that head room varied between 4'7" and 5'4", exceeding the observations of McHenry and the captor of the *Abbot Devereux*.[81] One possible mitigating factor may have been higher number of children aboard illegal slavers and thus the smaller body sizes of captives. Yet, as we have seen, not all traffickers put children under the deck. In addition, the absence of shackles on illegal slavers, especially after 1850, suggests extreme packing. Radburn has shown that in the legal British slave trade, men were afforded more space than women because they were shackled.[82] When Smith was asked by an interviewer after his voyage whether they had "chained or handcuffed" the men, he replied: "No, never; they would die."[83] The implication is that the absence of shackles in the illegal slave ships allowed for tighter packing beneath the deck. Ultimately, the only relief from these extreme conditions came from the death of fellow captives, who crews removed from the hold and tossed overboard.[84]

Extreme packing was ultimately driven by slave traders' greed and inhumanity, but ironically, abolition and suppression offered some encouragement. Tight packing had been a focal

[80] Radburn, "The Long Middle Passage: The Enslavement of Africans and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, 1640-1808" (PhD Dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 2016), 143.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid, 137-8.
[83] NY *Evangelist* in *The Liberator*, Dec. 15, 1854.
[84] Eltis argues the impact of suppression on space was "probably fairly limited." Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 136. For more on space during the illegal slave trade, particularly to Brazil, see Dinizulu Gene Tinnie, 'The Slaving Brig Henriqueta and Her Evil Sisters: A Case Study in the 19th-Century Illegal Slave Trade to Brazil,' *The Journal of African American History*, 93, 4 (Fall, 2008), 512-6; Chapelle, *History of American Sailing Ships*, 154, 161-63. For tight-packing in the legal slave trade from Angola, see Miller, *Way of Death*, 336-348.

point of the British abolitionist campaign, captured in the famous depiction of the slave ship *Brookes*. Parliament had responded with Dolben's Act (1788), which required slave ships to increase the ratio of tons to captives, thereby enlarging the space available to each slave. However, as slave trading nations including Britain abolished the trade, they surrendered control over these issues. Now, instead of observing laws such as Britain's Dolben's Act, slave traders were free to pack as many captives onto a slaver as they could.[85] Moreover, as abolitionism and suppression gradually took hold in many parts of the Atlantic world, the prices for captives fell in Africa. As Radburn has shown, slave traders always responded to low prices by cramming more captives onto their vessels.[86] In the mid-nineteenth century, traffickers carried more captives than ever. The average slaver contained 603 captives; almost double the average for the trade as a whole (310).[87] In some ways, therefore, suppression gave impetus to the traffic and made conditions for captives even more extreme.

These conditions were naturally associated with sickness and death. McHenry described horrific scenes aboard captured slavers arriving at St. Helena:

> "Some [captives] exhibit … thick crusts, formed from the drying of the humours of the craw-craw, a loathsome cutaneous eruption. A few, still able to crawl, may be remarked with the incipient pustules of the smallpox. Among the throng, are to be found a few unable to move, from the rack of rheumatism, the stab of pleurisy, or the tortures of a broken bone; or in the last stage of emaciation, oozing out their lives with the constant flux of dysentery; or perhaps just dead."[88]

Another observer describing the arrival of two intercepted slavers in Monrovia, Liberia, noted: "most of [the Africans] are nothing but skeletons, and so weak that at present they are unable to

[85] The Portuguese law of 1684 regulated the South Atlantic trade, though like Dolben's Act it was not always followed or enforced. See Miller, *Way of Death*, 341-2, 351-5, 358-60.
[86] Radburn, "The Long Middle Passage: The Enslavement of Africans and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, 1640-1808" (PhD Dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 2016), 145-6.
[87] Compare 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/oANHoiVM to http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/tTFvHnmp.
[88] George McHenry, *Visits to Slave-Ships*, published as a pamphlet by the British and Foreign Antislavery Society, 1863.

stand."[89] In June 1860, an American reporter describing another intercepted slaver, *Wildfire*, noted that of the 510 Africans still alive, "about a hundred … showed decided evidences of suffering from inanition, exhaustion, and disease." "Dysentery" he added, "was the principal disease."[90]

The *Julia Moulton*'s captives endured similar hardships. After the voyage, Smith acknowledged in a disturbingly offhand manner: "I lost a good many the last cruise-more than ever before."[91] In fact, 150 of the original 664 captives – 23 percent – died during the middle passage. Smith did not describe the symptoms of the dead, but they were likely among those mentioned by McHenry. He did locate the disease center: under the deck, amongst the men. When his crew discovered the sick, above or below, they laid them on the deck, presumably for better air, more space, and possibly some form of treatment. Supercargoes were typically charged with taking care of the sick. In this instance, however, Vilela, had also fallen ill and died about a week after leaving the coast.[92] Another Portuguese, Caetano, who had joined the vessel in Africa, took his place. Caetano had been the supercargo of the *Glamorgan*, and according to Willis, he became "Doctor" to the slaves.[93] Caetano's strategies to heal the sick are not mentioned in the sources, but with a death rate of three per day, they were clearly inadequate.

The mortality rate aboard among the *Julia Moulton* captives was slightly higher than most voyages after 1850. According to the 'Voyages' database, mortality rates along the West Central Africa-Cuba nexus averaged 16.5 percent between 1851 and 1866, compared to 23 percent on the brig.[94] In general, mortality was higher after 1850 than before; between 1810 and 1850, mortality

[89] *NYH*, Oct. 4, 1860.
[90] *Harper's Weekly*, June 2, 1860; Herbert Klein writes that dysentery "accounted for the majority of deaths and was the most common disease on all voyages." Herbert Klein, "Profits and Losses" in *The Atlantic Slave Trade*, ed. David Northup (Boston, MA, 2002), 93.
[91] NY *Evangelist* in *The Liberator*, Dec. 15, 1854.
[92] *NYT*, Jan 26, 1855
[93] *NYT*, Dec. 2, 1854.
[94] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/luiu9cxY

rates on the same route averaged 11.7 percent.[95] The rising mortality rate is puzzling for a few reasons. First, voyage length, which historians have correlated with mortality, was becoming shorter. The average voyage along the West Central Africa-Cuba route decreased from 66 days to 47 days during the timespans mentioned above (the *Julia Moulton* made the crossing in 45 days).[96] Secondly, historians have not found that mortality rates increased with tighter packing, which seems to have increased as the nineteenth century wore on. [97] Thirdly, the proportion of children, who may have been more susceptible to diseases found aboard illegal slavers, was not much higher after 1850 than before. On the West Central Africa–Cuba route, the percentage of children rose from 27 percent to 31 percent between 1810-1850 and 1851-1866.[98]

The rising mortality rate was likely related to growing suppression activity on the African coast. David Eltis has contended that epidemiological conditions prior to boarding were the main determinant of shipboard mortality rates.[99] These conditions likely worsened during midcentury, as suppression tightened. One impact of these measures was that traffickers moved to more remote parts of the coast, where they erected barracoons for slaves awaiting shipment. The epidemiological conditions in barracoons were likely worse than the slave pens of Luanda and

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[95] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/eqjz4Mas
[96] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/eqjz4Mas and http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/luiu9cxY
[97] On mortality in the slave trade, see Stanley L. Engerman et al., "Transoceanic Mortality: The Slave Trade in Comparative Perspective," *William and Mary Quarterly* 58, no. 1 (2001); D. Northrup, 'African mortality in the suppression of the slave trade: the case of the Bight of Biafra', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 9:1 (1978), 47-64; Sowande' M. Mustakeem, *Slavery at Sea*, chp 3; Joseph Miller, Mortality in the Atlantic Slave Trade," *Journal of Economic History* 11 (Winter 1981): 385-423; David Eltis, "Fluctuations in Mortality in the Last Half Century of the Transatlantic Slave Trade," *Social Science History* 13 (Autumn 1989): 315-40; Raymond Cohn, "Death of Slaves in the Middle Passage," *Journal of Economic History* 45 (September 1985): 685-92; Robert Stein, "Mortality in the Eighteenth Century French Slave Trade," *Journal of African History* 21, no. 1 (1980): 35-41; David Eltis, "Mortality and Voyage Lengths in the Middle Passage: New Evidence from the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Economic History* 44 (June 1984): 301-08; James Riley, "Mortality on Long Distance Voyages in the Eighteenth Century," *Journal of Economic History* 41 (September 1981): 651-56; Joseph Miller, "Mortality in the Atlantic Slave Trade: Statistical Evidence on Causality," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 11 (Autumn 1981): 317-29; Richard Steckel and Richard Jensen, "New Evidence on the Causes of Crew Mortality in the Atlantic Slave Trade" *Journal of Economic History* 46 (March 1986): 57-77.
[98] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/eqjz4Mas and http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/luiu9cxY
[99] Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 135-8.

Benguela in earlier generations. Many barracoons, for instance, were far from food and water. The American sailor Andrew Wilson noted "the nearest water was three miles off" from his barracoon, and "it was no small labor to bring the necessary water for drink."[100] Moreover, the British naval officer Charles Wise suggested that "insufficient diet" contributed to "fatal diseases" such as dysentry, in barracoons.[101] In many cases, captives spent long periods in these conditions. Wilson, for instance, waited two and a half months in a barracoon before catching the next slave ship back to the Americas.[102] In 1857, William McBlair, the captain of an American cruiser, USS *Dale*, noted that some slaves on the Loango Coast had "been detained from shipment for eight months." "Eight hundred of these poor persecuted creatures," he wrote to his wife, "have subsisted upon only one plantain a day each for that time."[103] In 1860, the captain of an American cruiser USS *Saratoga* made a direct connection between time spent at barracoons and mortality rates. He had recently intercepted the slaver *Nightingale* near the Congo Rover and had witnessed the subsequent deaths of 150 Africans under his own jurisdiction. In his view, the deceased's "long confinement in the barracoons, was of itself sufficient to account for the many deaths."[104]

A final distinctive feature of midcentury voyages was provisioning. During the legal slave trade of the early nineteenth century, and later, when it was only weakly policed, slavers typically brought some food from their outfitting port and picked up plenty of provisions on the African coast. Indeed, for some Africa societies, provisioning slavers was an important offshoot of the traffic itself.[105] The presence of cruisers, however, made provisioning on the African coast more

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[100] *NYT*, June 28, 1856.
[101] Commodore Wise to Rear-Admiral Sir F. Grey, July 20, 1859, enc. in Wise to Sec. of Admiralty, July 26, 1859, *Accounts and Papers*, 1860.
[102] *NYT*, June 28, 1856.
[103] William McBlair to Mrs. William McBlair, Oct. 29, 1857, William McBlair Papers, Mariners Museum Library, Newport News, Virginia. Thanks to Joe Mosier for making me aware of this source.
[104] *NYH*, June 17, 1861. For long confinement in barracoons, see Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 135-8.
[105] James Searing, *West African slavery and Atlantic commerce: the Senegal River valley, 1700-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); For provisioning in the south Atlantic trade before 1830, see Miller, *Way of*

difficult, especially as patrolling became more focused in the 1840s. Captain Smith strongly appreciated the perils of re-stocking on the African coast. On a previous voyage, he had been captured by a British cruiser having put into land for water. He had only escaped by running the ship into shore and making off with the help of allies on the coast.[106]

Such close shaves encouraged traffickers to shift provisioning away from Africa to the main outfitting ports in the Americas and Europe. The *Julia Moulton* was one of many vessels to load with rice, beans, and pork in New York. The *Augusta* did likewise in 1860. In another case in 1855, West Central African trafficker Guilherme Correa wrote to Lima Vianna in New York instructing him to "fit [the next vessel] out with everything except beef."[107] In other cases, slavers stopped in Europe for provisions. In 1858, the *Haidee* sailed from New York to Alicante, Spain, picked up rice and beans and journeyed onward to the Loango Coast in 1858.[108] Certainly, some vessels continued to take in some food and water on the coast, especially fish and water from the Congo River, but by the mid-nineteenth century, provisioning had largely shifted from Africa to the Americas and Europe.[109]

Slave traders' changing provisioning strategies had several implications for captives. Unlike earlier periods of the traffic, captives were exposed to a largely new diet during the middle passage. Illegal slavers carried mainly carbohydrates and proteins – usually rice and beans – to

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Death, 351-5. Miller notes that slavers brought provisions from Brazil when prices were especially high in Angola, 352. See also, Coughtry, *Notorious*, 147-8. For slavers' high dependence on African provisions generally, see David Eltis, "The Slave Trade and Commercial Agriculture in an African Context" in Suzanne Schwarz, Robin Law and Silke eds. *Commercial agriculture, the slave trade and slavery in Atlantic Africa* (Strickrodt Boydell & Brewer Ltd 2013), 28-53. For an argument that much provisioning took place in Europe before 1807, see Angus Dalrymple-Smith, 'Slave Ship Provisioning in the long 18th Century: A Boost to West African Commercial Agriculture?' European Review of Economic History (forthcoming).

[106] NY *Evangelist* in *The Liberator*, Dec. 15, 1854.

[107] Guilherme Jose da Silva Correa to João José Vianna, Apr. 21, 1855, enc. in John Morgan to Lord Clarendon, 13 June 1856 in *Accounts and Papers of the House of Commons* vol. 44 (London: Harrison and Sons, 1857), 132.

[108] See chapter 4 for a detailed discussion of this voyage.

[109] The *Brutus* for instance, took in beans, corn, pork and beef near the Congo River on the same day as it took captives. But it was increasingly common for slavers to carry the provisions with them. *Whaleman's Shipping List and Merchant's Transcript* (New Bedford, Mass), Aug. 27, 1861.

Africa. Rice, in particular, was not grown widely in West Central Africa, the main provenance zone for captives. The biscuit and beef aboard the *Julia Moulton* would likewise have been foreign (Correa ultimately used local fish, instead of beef in 1855). The effect of these new foods is hard to determine, but they presumably contributed to the gastrointestinal problems that were common on illegal slavers. Perhaps more significantly, captives were highly vulnerable to slave traders' greed as well as the inaccuracy of their calculations. Illegal slave traders regularly squeezed more captives aboard than they had provisions for.[110] Lack of water, in particular, was a serious problem, especially since stopping for fresh supplies was out of the question. Cudjo Lewis, who sailed aboard the *Clotilda* in 1860, remembered: "They geeve us little water-one swallow twice each day."[111] Some traffickers made the connection between the lack of water and death. John McCarthy a sailor on the *Huntress*, which sailed from West Central Africa to Cuba in 1863 and lost 250 captives said the "voyage was full of hardships and suffering, and there was a great scarcity of water."[112]

Africans responded to the physical conditions of the illegal middle passage much as they had done in previous eras. Some resisted violently. In 1853, an unnamed slaver arrived in Cuba from southeast Africa. According to the New York *Tribune* a large number of the captives had been as "maimed" during a violent, but ultimately failed, uprising.[113] In an even more striking case, in 1859, another slaver arrived in Cuba having lost almost its entire compliment of over 1,000 captives from insurrection and disease.[114] Largescale rebellions were nevertheless rare. There are

[110] This was regularly the case in the Brazil-Angola trade before 1830. See Miller, *Way of Death*, 351-5.
[111] Diouf, *Dreams*, 64.
[112] McCarthy in Savage to Wm. Seward, May 14, 1864, FO84/1222, TNA. For dehydration and the middle passage, see Kiple, Kenneth F. and Brian T. Higgins. "Mortality Caused by Dehydration during the Middle Passage," *Social Science History* 13, no. 4 (1989): 421–37. Sowande' Mustakeem, "I Never Have Such a Sickly Ship Before": Diet, Disease, and Mortality in 18th-Century Atlantic Slaving Voyage, *The Journal of African American History*, 93, 4 (Fall, 2008), 474-96.
[113] New York *Daily Times*, 1853 in FO84/905, TNA.
[114] This vessel is unnamed in 'Voyages' but its voyages is recorded as #4313.

only three known cases of insurrections after 1850; less than one percent of the total number of voyages.[115] This percentage is far below the ten percent average for the entire history of the trade. One factor may have been the concentration of captives coming from West Central Africa. Captives embarking from this region had always been statistically less likely to rebel than those originating elsewhere. Other factors may well have been the shorter voyages and large proportion of children.[116] Whatever the cause, the historically low ratio of crew to captives during this period was rarely a major problem for the traffickers.

Instead of attempting to physically overcome their captors, most captives' survival strategies centered on attempting to forge bonds with shipmates. Some historians have argued that midcentury captives were able to recreate social ties aboard slavers. In the case of the *Clotilda*, one of the few slavers to arrive on US shores, Sylviane Diouf, has suggested captives formed a "special connection" based on shared experience, "not unlike their experience of communal suffering during initiation."[117] In a similar vein, Sharla Fett has contended that survivors of the middle passage had already recreated "powerful social bonds" soon after their arrival in the Americas.[118] Although evidence for these connections is limited, the concentration of Kikongo speakers aboard illegal slavers may have allowed captives to begin the rebuilding process during the middle passage. By shoehorning the slave trade into relatively tight provenance zones, the suppression of the slave trade may therefore have provided at least some succor to captives.

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[115] 'Voyages' lists three cases of 'slave insurrection' after 1850: http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/vU3Zio2o

[116] For the shorter voyages argument, see Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 133. On violent resistance in the legal slave trade, see Eric Robert Taylor, *If We Must Die: Shipboard Insurrections in the era of the TransAtlantic Slave Trade* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006); David Richardson, "Shipboard Revolts, African Authority, and the Atlantic Slave Trade," *William and Mary Quarterly* 58 (January 2001): 69-92; Sowande' M. Mustakeem, *Slavery at Sea*, chps 4 and 5.

[117] Diouf, *Dreams*, 68.

[118] Sharla M. Fett, *Recaptured Africans: Surviving Slave Ships, Detention, and Dislocation in the Final Years of the Slave Trade* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 9.

The Destinations of Midcentury Captives

Captives who survived the middle passage faced an unusual set of possible destinations. On the one hand, suppression had narrowed the smuggling routes substantially. During most of the transatlantic slave trade, enslaved Africans arrived in many parts of the Americas. By the late eighteenth century, captives were disembarking from the Chesapeake to Rio de la Plata and almost everywhere in between. The number of destinations fell significantly with the widespread abolition of the trade in the early nineteenth century, although captives continued to arrive illegally in Brazil, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and other minor importation zones. When Brazil suppressed the slave trade to its shores in 1850, however, Cuba became the only major importer of enslaved Africans. About 20 slavers did arrive in Brazil in the early 1850s, and two vessels brought captives to the US in 1859 and 1860, but these numbers were dwarfed by the Cuban figures. Between 1851 and 1866, around 500 slavers arrived on the island's shores, bringing about 165,000 captives.[119] It was for this reason that many observers simply dubbed the slave trade, the 'Cuban' slave trade, after 1850.

Despite narrowing the smuggling routes, suppression in some ways diversified the range of destinations for Africans. Nineteenth century naval patrols resulted in the interception of hundreds of slavers in the nineteenth century. About a third were carrying captives whom the British and American authorities referred to as 'liberated' or 'recaptured' Africans. Overall, around 181,000 Africans were intercepted by cruisers between 1800 and 1863.[120] Between 1851 and 1863, the figure was 26,748; a fairly large share of the total considering the much smaller scale of the traffic during this timeframe.[121] According to David Eltis, about 85 percent of all interceptions

[119] See chapter 1 for the ship numbers and Table 2 for the captive numbers.
[120] Domingues da Silva, Daniel; Eltis, David; Misevich, Philip; Ojo, Olatunji, 'The diaspora of Africans liberated from slave ships in the nineteenth century' *Journal of African History*, 55 (2014): 347-69. For an overview of 'liberated' Africans and a database of intercepted vessels, see Henry B. Lovejoy et al. "The Liberated Africans Project," accessible at http://www.liberatedafricans.org/index.html.
[121] Derived from data on intercepted vessels in 'Voyages'. See http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/p7WLuqO1.

took place in African waters, where the naval suppression effort was more vigorous than in the Americas.[122] This pattern was repeated during the final phase of the trade, with particular concentrations near West Central Africa and the Bight of Benin. The remaining captives were intercepted in the Americas, especially in the Gulf of Mexico in the late 1850s and early 1860s.

The final destinations for these Africans depended on the authority that intercepted them. Britain interdicted the vast majority of captives after 1850; 16,608, or 52 percent of the total.[123] In most cases, British cruisers escorted slavers and their captives (where they existed) to the nearest British Vice-Admiralty Court (VACs). These Courts were widely dispersed across the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Of the total 130 cases adjudicated at VACs, the Court at Sierra Leone heard 69; St. Helena, 65; and Jamaica, Antigua, Mauritius, and Lagos a few each. Overall, the VACs courts heard 31 cases involving captives.[124] In the vast majority of these cases, whether slaves had been found aboard or not, the VAC judge condemned the ship. If Africans were involved, he typically placed them under the jurisdiction of the Colonial Office.[125]

The subsequent fate of Africans 'liberated' by British suppression was strongly influenced by the growing demands of West Indian planters. Until the 1830s, Britain had sent most Africans to its West African colony, Sierra Leone, to serve as unpaid apprentices. This pattern shifted in the aftermath of the British Emancipation Act in 1833 and the expiration of the apprenticeship period in 1838. Complaining bitterly of labor shortages, Caribbean planters urged the Colonial office to

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[122] Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 100.
[123] Derived from data on intercepted vessels in 'Voyages'. See http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/p7WLuqO1.
[124] Of the 69 Sierra Leone vessels, 14 had captives (5,048 embarked in Africa / 3,514 arrived for adjudication); of the St. Helena 65 vessels, 16 had captives (8,293/7,556). 2 of 2 at Mauritius had captives (1,390/1,186); 1 of 3 at Jamaica (500/362); 0 of 1 at Antigua; 0 of 1 at Lagos. Three further voyages, which TAST does not provided much information about yield the remain figures: 1,307/1,146. Source: http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/p7WLuqO1.
[125] Pearson, Andrew. *Distant Freedom: St Helena and the Abolition of the Slave Trade, 1840-1872* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016); Jeffs, Ben, Helen MacQuarrie, Andrew Pearson and Annsofie Witkin, *Infernal Traffic: Excavation of a Liberated African Graveyard in Rupert's Valley, St. Helena* (London: Council for British Archeology, 2012); Martinez, Jenny. *The Slave Trade and the Origins of International Human Rights Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

send the liberated Africans to them. The Colonial Office acquiesced, and by the mid-1840s, the transshipment of Africans to the West Indies became what historian Rosanne Adderley describes as "standard British policy."[126] By the 1850s, two in every three intercepted Africans were passing through the VAC at St. Helena, on their way to British Guiana, Trinidad, and Jamaica. Upon their arrival in the West Indies, they began three to five year indentures, after which they became legally unbound and eligible for paid work.[127]

Captives intercepted by American cruisers had a different experience. In total, the US Navy intercepted 6,452 Africans after 1850.[128] In a new policy devised in the mid-nineteenth century, the American government sent these Africans to Liberia, West Africa. This policy emerged from the maelstrom of racial politics in the US and the historical connection between the US and Liberia. With the status of free blacks roiling American politics in the early nineteenth century, an emigration movement headed by the American Colonization Society (ACS) encouraged free African Americans to resettle in the newly founded Republic of Liberia. Although widely unpopular among American blacks and largely unsuccessful, the colonization movement offered

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[126] Rosanne Marion Adderley, *"New Negroes From Africa": Slave Trade Abolition and Free African Settlement in the Nineteenth Century Caribbean* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006), 74. For the shift in British policy, see ibid, 72-5.

[127] Adderley, *"New Negroes";* Schuler, Monica. "*Alas, Alas, Kongo": A Social History of Indentured African Immigration into Jamaica, 1841-1865* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980). Around 364 Africans also ended up in the Bahamas 1850, due to the shipwreck of a slaver, *Heroina* (also known as *Peter Mowell*) in 1860, which was bound for Cuba. See Adderley, *New Negroes*, 61-2, 129-130 (Voyages #4365). For more on British-intercepted Africans, see Suzanne Schwarz, 'Reconstructing the Life Histories of Liberated Africans: Sierra Leone in the Early Nineteenth Century' *History in Africa*, 39 (2012): 175-207; Richard Anderson, The Diaspora of Sierra Leone's Liberated Africans: Enlistment, Forced Migration, and "Liberation" at Freetown, 1808-1863' *African Economic History*, 41 (2013): 101-138; Maeve, Ryan, "'A moral millstone'?: British humanitarian governance and the policy of liberated African apprenticeship, 1808–1848," *Slavery & Abolition*, 37, 2, (Jan. 2016): 399-422; J.U.J. Asiegbu, *Slavery and the Politics of Liberation, 1787-1861: A Study of Liberated African Emigration and British Anti-Slavery Policy* (New York, 1969). On foreign indentured laborers in the British West Indies see, Hugh Tinker, *A New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Overseas, 1830-1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974); Walton Look Lai, *Indentured Labor, Caribbean Sugar: Chinese and Indian Migrants to the British West Indies, 1838-1918* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); David Northrup, *Indentured Labor in the Age of Imperialism, 1834-1922* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[128] These vessels (with captives) were: *Echo*, 318; *Wildfire*, 559; *William*, 570; *Bogota*, 441; *Erie*, 897; *Storm King*, 619; *Cora*, 709; *Bonito*, 750; *Delicica*, 673; *Nightingale*, 916. See Fett, *Recaptive Africans*, Table 2, 140 and 'Voyages'.

Congress an opening for how to deal with the intercepted Africans in the mid-nineteenth century. With the US already bitterly divided over the future of slavery, and the permanent settlement of Africans on American soil therefore out of the question, the Liberian option proved a convenient solution to the 'problem' of intercepted Africans. Sensing the opportunity, Congress authorized, and paid, the ACS to oversee the transport and settlement of the Africans in Liberia. Upon their arrival, they became apprentices, mainly to African American emigrants, for seven to fourteen years. [129]

The Spanish were the final major contributor to the interception figures. Although the Spanish Navy failed to interdict any captives in Cuban waters after 1850, the colonial authorities did intercept 5,000 newly-arrived Africans, or *bozales*, on land.[130] Under the terms of treaties made with British governments in 1817 and 1835, these Africans were declared *emancipados* (emancipated slaves). According to the treaties, *emancipados* were meant to serve as apprentices for five to seven years and then become completely free. During their indentures, however, most planters employed them like slaves, forcing them to work the cane fields and treating them in the same fashion. Moreover, in most cases, the Cuban authorities permitted planters to continue apprenticeships well after five years. Many Africans endured decades of apprenticeship and never became free, working effectively as slaves for the rest of their lives, or until large scale Cuban emancipation, which began in the 1870s. In fact, the situation was in some respects worse for

[129] Karen Fisher Younger, "Liberia and the Last Slave Ships" *Civil War History*, 54, 4 (Dec. 2008): 424-442. David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Emancipation* (New York, NY: Knopf, 2014). For the US politics of receptive transportation to Liberia see, Ted Maris-Wolf, "'Of Blood and Treasure': Recaptive Africans the Politics of Slave Trade Suppression," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 4 (2014): 53-83.

[130] Crawford to Clarendon, Sept. 27, 1854, FO84/937. Additional captures computed from Angeles and Perera, 251-9. Inés Roldán de Montaud gives 4,661 as the 1851-66 figure. Derived from Roldán, 'On the Blurred Boundaries of Freedom: Liberated Africans in Cuba, 1817-1870' in Dale W. Tomich ed. *New Frontiers of Slavery* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2016).

emancipados; as 'liberated' Africans they were denied the traditional right of Cuban slaves to *coartación* – the right to purchase their own freedom.[131]

Tables 3.2 and 3.3 summarize the foregoing information. Table 3.2 outlines the broad outcomes for all captives boarding slave ships in Africa after 1850. The vast majority – almost 7 in every 10 – were enslaved in Cuba. Much smaller numbers died during the middle passage and were intercepted on land and sea. The most distinctive feature of these figures is the very large proportion of captives going to a single destination. At the same time, although the proportion of Africans who died or were intercepted during the middle passage was broadly similar to earlier periods of the illegal trade, it represents a much larger proportion of captives who did not complete their voyage as their captors intended compared to the legal trade, when interception was not a concern.

Table 3.2. *Outcomes for all captives embarking aboard slavers in Africa, 1851-1866*[132]

Slavery in Cuba	159,967	69.6%
Death during the middle passage	38,114	16.6%
Intercepted on land or sea	31,748	13.8%
	229,829	100.0%

[131] Roldán, 'On the Blurred Boundaries', 159-92; Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 271-297. For Cuban emancipation, see Rebecca Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899* (Princeton University Press, 1985). Though smaller in number, intercepted Africans also entered apprenticeships in slave societies of Brazil and Angola, after 1850, and here too they faced similar blockages as Cuban *emancipados*. For Brazil, see, Daryle Williams, *The Broken Paths of Freedom: The Free Africans of the Cezar in Nineteenth-Century Brazilian Slave Society* (forthcoming); B.G. Mamigonian, 'In the Name of Freedom: Slave Trade Abolition, the Law and the Brazilian Branch of the African Emigration Scheme (Brazil-British West Indies, 1830s-1850s)', *Slavery and Abolition*, 30:1 (2009): 41-66;; Robert Conrad, "Neither Slave nor Free: The Emancipados of Brazil, 1818-1868," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 53, 1 (1973): 50-70. For Angola, see S. Coghe, 'The Problem of Freedom in a Mid-Nineteenth-Century Atlantic Slave Society: The Liberated Africans of the Anglo-Portuguese mixed commission in Luanda (1844-1870)', *Slavery and Abolition*, 33:3 (2012): 479-500. For an overview of the trade of indentured Chinese laborers to Cuba, see Evelyn Hu-DeHart, 'La Trata Amarilla: The "Yellow Trade" and the Middle Passage, 1847-1884,' in Emma Christopher, Cassandra Pybus, and Marcus Rediker, *Many Middle Passages: Forced Migration and the Making of the Modern Word* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press), 166-83.

[132] Figures derived from the 'slaves embarked' (229,829) for the period 1851-1866. See http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/GmJ3AMou. Calculations are as follows: Slaves embarked–slaves disembarked= deaths during middle passage (229,829-191,715=38,114); slaves disembarked–slaves intercepted=number of Africans in Cuban slavery (191,715–31,748=159,967). The 'slaves intercepted' figure is computed from sources cited in earlier footnotes. 2 in 3 of captured vessels carried no slaves. Overall, 156 of 537 voyages were intercepted.

Table 3.3 indicates the outcomes for intercepted Africans by destination and by legal status. These Africans faced a kaleidoscope of possible destinations, ranging from South America, the British and Spanish Caribbean, to Liberia and Sierra Leone in West Africa. The concentrations in the British West Indies and Liberia, however, were distinctive of the mid-nineteenth century. The legal status of intercepted Africans was fairly uniform throughout the Atlantic basin. Yet there were distinctions on the ground. For many, particularly Cuban *emancipados*, life as a 'liberated' African was not materially different than slavery in Cuba. At the same time, as Daniel Domingues and others have pointed out, Africans who ended up in Liberia typically faced shorter indentures and conditions quite different to slavery in Cuba.[133] In any case, having been shuttled into another new, and often brutal world, 'liberation' was hardly a panacea for liberated Africans.[134]

Table 3.3. *Outcomes for intercepted Africans, 1851-1866*

Intercepted by the British Navy and sent to British West Indies or Sierra Leone	16,608	52.3%
Intercepted by the US Navy and sent to Liberia	6,452	20.3%
Intercepted by Spain and remained in Cuba as *emancipados*	5,000	15.7%
Intercepted by Brazil and became apprentices in Brazil	3,116	9.8%
Intercepted by Portuguese Navy and became apprentices in Angola	572	1.8%
	31,748	99.9%

The *Julia Moulton* captives were among the 14 percent of Africans who were intercepted *en route* to Cuba. Having made a relatively speedy Atlantic crossing, the brig approached Trinidad de Cuba in mid-June, 1854. Following detailed instructions like given to him by Correa in New

[133] Domingues da Silva, Daniel; Eltis, David; Misevich, Philip; Ojo, Olatunji, 'The diaspora of Africans liberated from slave ships in the nineteenth century' *Journal of African History*, 55 (2014): 347-69

[134] Brazil captured 8 vessels after 1850, carrying 3,116 captives. http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/KpCtwz3j. The Portuguese intercepted 5 vessels after 1850, carrying 572 captives. http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/LSj4tSG3. For more on these captures see Roque Ferreira (forthcoming), 'The Broken Paths of Freedom' website: https://web.stanford.edu/group/spatialhistory/cgi-bin/site/project.php?id=1069, da Silva et al.

York, Captain Smith sailed to a specific latitude and longitude between Cayo Blanco and Cayo Zarzo, just east of Trinidad. Coming to a halt, the crew made a signal to the shore using a white and red flag. Receiving this cue, Cuban traffickers immediately came off the coast in three launches. After some discussion, they ferried the captives ashore. When everyone had reached land, the Cubans forced the Africans to walk to a farm a few miles distant. Some, who were too sick to walk, were carried by other captives. Meanwhile, back on the water, one of the Cubans ran the *Julia Moulton* into shore and burned it. Battered, filthy, and worth very little, the brig followed the fate of most midcentury slavers after its work was done.[135]

Up to this point, the voyage had gone to plan, but now it began to disintegrate. The winds of suppression had temporarily shifted in the Spanish empire. In 1853, the Spanish government in Madrid was particularly concerned about the growing threat of Cuban annexation from the US. But to stave off the Americans, Spain needed British support, and the price of British support was tougher action against the slave trade. In this context, the metropolitan government dispatched Juan de la Pezuela to Cuba as the new captain general. Pezuela was much more committed to suppression of the slave trade than his predecessors, and with support from Madrid, he got to work immediately. In early 1854 he removed several corrupt officials throughout the island, and in May he granted Cuban authorities permission to enter estates to search for *bozales*, a right they had been denied since 1845.[136]

The *Julia Moulton* captives were intercepted in the midst of this crackdown. In June 1854, Pezuela sent a trusted deputy, Brigadier Juan Rodriguez de la Torre, to lead an assault on the slave

[135] *NYT*, Nov. 7, 1854; *NYH*, Nov. 9, 1854.
[136] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 233-9. For the rising power of the captain general over the island's affairs in the nineteenth century, see Josep M. Fradera, *Colonias para después de un imperio* (Barcelona, Ediciones Bellaterra, 2005), 183-326.

trade in Trinidad and Sancti Spíritus.[137] Within a few weeks, the lieutenant governors of both jurisdictions, Juan Martin and Santiago Gurrea, had been suspended from office, and the regions' leading traffickers, Salvador de Castro Sr., Pedro Choperano, and Mariano Borrell, had been arrested and imprisoned in Havana.[138] By September, over 806 *bozales* had been intercepted in the two jurisdictions.[139] According to John Backhouse, the British commissioner at the Court of Mixed Commission in Havana, 490 of this number had "landed from Julia [Moulton] at a place called San Carlos at a sugar estate not far from Trinidad."[140] This estate, laying in Trinidad's valley of *ingenios* (sugar mills), was the second biggest sugar producing estate in the jurisdiction and lay a dozen miles from the coast.[141]

After the Cuban authorities intercepted the *Julia Moulton* Africans at San Carlos, they transferred them to the *deposito de emancipados* in Havana. In July 1854, the Cuban government made an announcement in its official paper, *Gaceta*, inviting a list of "persons favored" to come to the *deposito*.[142] The listed parties, who included men and women, Cuban officials, as well as the government itself, had applied for a certain number of apprentices well before the landings in Trinidad and Sancti Spíritus had occurred. Now they had their chance to select their labor. In a process that closely resembled a slave auction, the Africans were paraded and the buyers decided who to take on. Prices were set by age and sex, and buyers made their choices carefully. One man, who had signed up for five *emancipados*, selected two boys for $84 in total, a 22-year-old woman

[137] Crawford to FO, July 14, 1854, FO84/937, TNA.
[138] Crawford to FO, July 6 & July 14, 1854, FO84/937, TNA.
[139] Crawford to FO, Sept. 27, 1854, FO84/937, TNA.
[140] Backhouse to FO, Jan. 1, 1855, FO84/959, TNA.
[141] Carlos Rebello, *Ingenios de Cuba* (1860), jurisdicción de Trinidad (I). It is possible the estate was San Carlos in Sancti Spíritus, which was owned by the Conde de casa Brunet, a relation of Mariano Borrell. See ibid, jurisdicción de Sancti Spíritus.
. For further details on the crackdown in the summer of 1854, see GG, Leg. 427, no. 20579, ANC.
[142] Enclosed in Backhouse to Clarendon, Aug. 3, 1854, FO84/959, TNA.

for $48, and a 17-year-old girl for $38 dollars, but discarded his fifth option because he didn't like the deal.[143]

The distribution and subsequent fate of the *Julia Moulton* Africans is unclear, but apprenticeship offered little to *emancipados*. The money paid by the buyers was meant to be given to Africans for their first four months of labor, but in many cases *emancipados* were never paid. Similarly, although the apprenticeships were to last five years, with *emancipados* retaining the right to seek reassignment each year, these terms were often broken by buyers and ignored by the Cuban government. Moreover, although the *Gaceta* announcement reminded consignees to "fulfill the duties which religion, morality, and the existing regulations impose upon them," this meant little in practice. By the fall of 1854, the threat of American annexation had subsided and the Spanish government recalled Pezuela. A new governor, José de la Concha, took his place. He was more closely connected to Cuban slave traders and gave little regard to *emancipados*. Soon, the 'Cuban' slave trade picked up again.[144]

Conclusion

The voyage of the *Julia Moulton* illustrates how the mid-nineteenth century slave trade was similar to, and distinctive from, pervious eras of the traffic. On the one hand, some broad features of the traffic were similar to earlier periods, especially to the illegal slave trade of previous decades. Many of the trends highlighted in this chapter, such as larger vessels; bigger and more diverse crews; more captives per voyage; a higher proportion of children; quicker voyages; the narrowing destinations for the enslaved; and the possibility of interception, had begun in the early nineteenth century. On the other hand, many of these features had become much more acute by 1850. For

[143] Backhouse to Clarendon, Aug. 3, 1854, FO84/959, TNA.
[144] Roldán, 'On the Blurred Boundaries' 144-6; Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 238.

example, few illegal slavers during the 1830s and 1840s were as large or carried as many captives as the *Julia Moulton*. But perhaps the most distinctive feature of the midcentury trade was the pathways travelled by slavers and their captives. After 1850, the vast majority of vessels travelled a single route, beginning in the US, running to West Central Africa (often via Cuba), and finally reaching the 'Pearl of the Antilles.' At the same time, the minority of Africans who were intercepted on land and sea faced a variety of indentures in a largely distinctive array of destinations.

Three factors were particularly important in determining these trends. One was the growing profitability of the trade, which was ultimately a function of burgeoning American and European demand for slave-produced sugar in Cuba. These record profits encouraged slave traders to purchase larger vessels and to jam more captives aboard them in ever-tightening formations. A second issue was technological innovation, which put these large, fast vessels on the market. It also lowered shipping costs, which invited distant parts of the African coast into the trade. Yet, suppression was by far the most important factor. Suppression powerfully shaped the routes taken by ships and their captives, as well as captives' environments prior to embarkation and aboard the slaver. It also determined the lifeways of the 32,000 Africans intercepted on land and sea after 1850.

Although suppression strongly shaped the slave trade during the mid-nineteenth century, it did not succeed in its ultimate goal of ending the trade until 1866. In the wake of the *Julia Moulton*, the battle between slave traders and their adversaries continued in many parts of the Atlantic basin. In 1855, a year after the *Julia Moulton*'s voyage, one of the key players in the illegal slave trade, Cunha Reis, left West Central Africa and immigrated to New York. His arrival heralded a new era

of intensive slave trading from the US. The following chapter analyzes the international effort to block Cunha Reis and his allies in Lower Manhattan.

Chapter 4

British Spies and the Challenge of Suppression in New York and the Atlantic World

In March 1860, the British Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston wrote to his Foreign Secretary, John Russell suggesting a plan for suppressing the illegal slave trade to Cuba. The island was the only major remaining market for enslaved Africans, and the previous year, an all-time record 32,379 captives disembarked on its shores.[1] Noting that traffickers were paying handsome bribes to Cuban officials to ignore, or even abet these arrivals, Palmerston mused whether "it would be but fair to fight the slave traders with their own weapons."[2] What he meant was that the Foreign Office hire local spies to report on the traffic. Palmerston envisaged these informants reporting on all kinds of industry secrets (including the complicity of officials), but what he really valued was intelligence on the movements of slave ships. This information, he believed, could be crucial in helping Britain's navy interdict slavers at sea. It might even help bring the trade to an end. Paying spies, he wrote, was a way "to kill [the] trade with 'silver lances.'"[3]

Palmerston was actually suggesting an extension to a preexisting strategy. As Foreign Secretary, he had authorized the hire of Britain's first major spy in 1849. This informant, Joaquim Alcoforado, was the captain of a coastal steamer that plied the waters around Rio de Janeiro, the largest slaving port in the Americas at the time.[4] His work impressed Palmerston. Reflecting on

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[1] Voyages, http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/X6Pp05Dt
[2] Palmerston to Russell, Mar. 14, 1860, PRO/32/22/21, Russell Papers, TNA.
[3] Palmerston to Russell, Mar. 14, 1860, PRO/32/22/21, Russell Papers, TNA.
[4] On Alcoforado, see Leslie Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970) 310-11, 351-2; Alcoforado, Joaquim de Paula Guedes, "História sobre o infame negócio de africanos da África Oriental e Ocidental, com todas as ocorrências desde 1831 a 1853." Transcribed by Roquinaldo Ferreira, *Estudos Afro-Asiáticos* 28 (1995): 219-29; and later in this chapter, especially the first section. On the slave trade in Rio de Janeiro, see Manolo G. Florentino, "Slave trading and slave traders in Rio de Janeiro, 1790-1830," in *Enslaving connections: changing cultures of Africa and Brazil during the era of slavery*, ed. José Curto and Paul E. Lovejoy (Amherst: NY: Humanity Books, 2004), 57-79.

the dramatic collapse of the Brazilian trade in 1850, he told Russell it had been Alcoforado who had "brought the slave trade there to an end."[5] Although Palmerston exaggerated, eliding other forms of British pressure and growing anti-slave trade sentiment in Brazil, his comment showed that the highest officials in the British government believed spying could work. The Foreign Office underlined the point after 1850, when it expanded its intelligence-gathering operations. As the traffic shifted to new axes linking the US, Iberia, the Bight of Benin, West Central Africa, and Cuba, Britain hired new informants to match it. By 1860, when Palmerston penned his note to Russell, the Foreign Office was already receiving intelligence from every major slaving zone in the Atlantic basin. In total, about a dozen informants reported to the British government between 1850 and the end of the trade in 1866.[6] It even retained some Cuban spies until the late 1860s to guard against a resurgence of the trade.[7]

Britain was not alone in valuing 'insider' information. Although many other nations' governments were not committed to suppression for long periods of the nineteenth century, those that were, typically paid informants. The Brazilian government, for instance, followed up the closure of its trade in 1850 by hiring the same Alcoforado to help keep it down.[8] Seemingly a unique example, Alcoforado served two masters for much of 1850s. In Cuba, governors who were genuinely committed to suppression also gathered information from unofficial sources. Captain General Pezuela (1853-54) was one prominent example.[9] The US actually enshrined slave trade

[5] Palmerton to Russell, Mar. 14, 1860, PRO/32/22/21, Russell Papers, TNA.
[6] Because Foreign Office staff did not keep a central record of informants or their pay scales, it is difficult to say exactly how many informants Britain had. They did, however, make direct and indirect references to about a dozen informants. The following are mentioned by name: Emilio Sanchez (New York); Joaquim Alcoforado (Rio); Brito (Brazil); Francisco Rovirosa (Havana), Laureano Thomes (Bahia Honda); José Barreto (Ouidah).
[7] For the continued use of slave trade informants in Cuba, see Consul General John V. Crawford to Clarendon, Sept. 30, 1869, FO84/1303.
[8] Leslie Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade*, 351-2; Alcoforado, "História sobre o infame," 219-29.
[9] See Pezeula's Government Secretary's remarks to Crawford in Crawford to Clarendon, July 25, 1854, FO84/937.

spying into federal legislation. The Act of 1819 invited "any citizens, or other person" to report illegal disembarkations on American soil, and promised $50 in return for every intercepted captive.[10] Although paying for intelligence seems to have tailed off in the US as the century wore on and slave imports declined, it made a resurgence in 1862, when the federal government finally clamped down on slave ship outfitting in its ports. In that year, district attorneys in New York paid dockworkers, traffickers' cellmates, and other insiders for slave trade intelligence.[11]

Despite the widespread use of spies, Britain's engagement with them was distinctive. Britain, for instance, used informants more widely and systematically than other powers. While most other nations hired spies sporadically and in piecemeal fashion, after 1849, Britain ran a far-reaching spy program, complete with standardized pay scales for the best informants. Another distinction was the variety and invasiveness of Britain's intelligence network. Whereas other powers generally hired spies only within their national boundaries, Britain typically hired foreign nationals based in other states.[12] As a result, Britain was not only penetrating the slave traders' world, but also the jurisdictions of other powers. A final difference was that Britain's spy network was uniquely connected to a wider apparatus of international suppression. Much of the intelligence

[10] Paul Finkleman, "The American Suppression of the African Slave Trade: Lessons on Legal Change, Social Policy, and Legislation," *Akron Law Review*, 42 (2009): 464-465.

[11] E. Delafield Smith to Caleb Smith (Sec of Interior), Sept 24, 1861 and Murray to Caleb Smith, May 2, 1862, Records of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior relating to the Suppression of Slave Trade and Negro Colonization, 1854-1872, NARA Microfilm Publication M160, NARA (hereafter NARA M160). In 1859, President Buchanan sent an agent named Slocumb to Southern states to investigate rumors of slave landings. See Warren Howard, *Slavers and the Federal Law*, ch 9, and Robert Ralph Davis, Jr. "Buchanian Espionage: A Report on Illegal Slave Trading in the South in 1859," *The Journal of Southern History* 37 (1971): 271-278.

[12] There are two exceptions in the American case. An informant in Lisbon gave intelligence to the US Minister, John O'Sullivan, on at least one occasion in 1856. O'Sullivan did not explain the informant's motive to the State Department or if he had paid the informant for his intelligence. Also, in 1862, the US Marshal in New York, Robert Murray, sent private citizens as spies to Cadiz, Marseilles, Lisbon, and Barcelona, to prevent an American woman named Mrs. Watson from aiding the slave trade there. On the Lisbon informant, see John O'Sullivan to William L. Marcy, 24 August 1856, SDR, NARA. On the Watson spies, see Murray's expenses for suppression, Apr. 22, 1861 – May 30, 1862, NARA, M160.

gathered by their spies passed through London and ended up aboard British cruisers off the African coast. Thus, although spying was widespread, Britain used it most aggressively and most globally.

Despite being a common feature of suppression, spying has not been closely examined by historians. Although a few scholars, including María de los Ángeles Meriño Fuentes and Aisnara Perera Díaz, Leslie Bethell, David Eltis, Richard Huzzey, and Leonardo Marques, have noted the presence of some spies during the nineteenth century, especially those who worked for the British, spies typically appear as minor characters in larger synthetic works.[13] As a result, the full extent of spying, as well as the motives, work, and effectiveness of spies themselves remain unclear. This chapter offers the first sustained analysis of informants, revealing the scale, dynamics and larger meanings of slave trade spying.[14]

The role of one British spy, Emilio Sanchez y Dolz, is the focus of this chapter. Sanchez was a Cuban-born shipbroker and commission merchant based in New York, the key slave ship market in the Atlantic Basin after 1850. He was a British informant from February 1859 to May 1862. During that time, he devoted almost his entire time to the job. Using his regular occupation as a cover, he stalked the merchant district of Lower Manhattan, gleaning information from seafarers and dockworkers, and following the slave traders around their favorite haunts. In total,

[13] María de los Ángeles Meriño Fuentes and Aisnara Perera Díaz, *Contrabando de bozales en Cuba: perseguir el tráfico y mantener la esclavitud, 1845-1866* (Mayabeque, Cuba: Ediciones Montecallado, 2015), 37-45; Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade*, 310-11, 351-2; Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 114, 157; Richard Huzzey, *Freedom Burning: Anti-Slavery and Empire in Victorian Britain* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 45; Marques, *The United States*, 149-50, 170, 242; Roquinaldo Ferreira transcription, Alcoforado, "História sobre o infame negócio."

[14] María de los Ángeles and Aisnara Perera Díaz do recognize that spying was important, but only in the Cuban context. For the broader issues of state-sponsored spying, information gathering, and industrial espionage in the long nineteenth century, see C.A. Bayly, *Empire and Information: Intelligence gathering and social communication in India, 1780-1870* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Simon Schaffer, Lissa Roberts, Kapil Raj, James Delbourgo eds*., The Brokered World: Go-Betweens and Global Intelligence, 1770-1820* (Sagamore Beach, MA: Science History Publications, 2009); J.R. Harris, *Industrial Espionage and Technology Transfer: Britain and France in the Eighteenth Century* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1998).

he wrote at least 178 missives on the traffic to his handler, Edward Archibald, the British consul in New York. These notes were generally 2-3 pages in length and included all kinds of information, including ship clearances, the whereabouts of prominent slave traders, and traffickers' international networks. His reports represent the single best source on the workings of US traffic in the mid-nineteenth century.[15]

Sanchez is a particularly useful case study. He is the only informant whose intelligence is recorded in bulk in the British national archives. Sanchez's extensive correspondence with Archibald contrasts with the slivers of intelligence that have survived from other spies, such as Alcoforado. In addition, Sanchez was greatly valued by the British government. In total, the Foreign Office paid him £1,400, or about $7,000.[16] Only Alcoforado received more (about double), and that would probably not have been the case had British cruisers been positioned outside New York, as they were at Rio.[17] Sanchez is also a good case study because he was Britain's longest-serving fulltime informant. Britain did pay Alcoforado over a longer period, but the traffic ended two years into his contract, and his information seems to have dried up quickly. Sanchez by contrast, gave at least weekly intelligence for 3 years and 4 months. His tenure began as New York's slave trade reached its peak in 1859, and ended in 1862, when the traffic finally shifted away from the US.

Sanchez's career as a spy suggests new ways of thinking about the nature, effectiveness, and limitations of slave trade suppression. Britain's role in tackling the trade rightfully looms large in historiography, but it was only partly British. Foreign nationals, including Sanchez, were a key component of its campaign. Moreover, these informants came to the task for the own reasons,

[15] Sanchez's slave trade correspondence can be found in FO84/1086, FO84/1111, FO84/1138, FO84/1172.
[16] For Sanchez's payments, see footnote …
[17] For Alcoforado's payments, see footnote 47.

many of which were not in line with those of their masters or the British public. British suppression was therefore powered by an eclectic mix of British-centered impulses and the priorities of secret overseas agents, at least in mid-century. The role of Sanchez and other spies also shows how slave trade ports were not unregulated places where traffickers ran amok, as commonly depicted in existing literature.[18] By hiring spies, Britain turned them into marketplaces for information and battlegrounds over the trade. Although spies were invisible to most observers – including slave traders – they were striking real blows against the traffic. Finally, spying helps explain what it took to finally bring the slave trade to an end in the US and across the Atlantic basin. Britain used spies to operate an impressively global suppression campaign, but what could it achieve in a world where anti-slave trade sentiment had not yet been globalized? The case of Sanchez shows what could and could not be achieved in this context.

The following chapter develops these points over four sections. The first explains how and why Britain developed a large network of slave trade spies in the mid-nineteenth century. It shows that Britain was uniquely equipped, both in ideological and practical terms, to do so. The second section highlights the many reasons why Sanchez, and other spies, joined this network. The third closely examines Sanchez's work in New York. It also shows how he used professional and familial connections to expand his reportage to the slave trade in his native Cuba. The final section analyzes Sanchez's contribution to slave trade suppression, both off the African coast and in New York. The chapter concludes by showing that although Britain's global suppression campaign put a dent in the US trade, it could not kill the traffic without support from the federal government.

[18] This is the standard portrayal of New York between 1850 and 1862. See, for example, Du Bois, *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1896).

The rise of spying in British suppression

Britain's use of slave trade spies was rooted in frustration with the ineffectiveness of its suppression efforts. By the 1840s, Britain was pursuing a wide-ranging suppression campaign, spearheaded by a large deployment off the African coast and in Brazilian waters, and supported by a network of anti-slave trade treaties with a large number of states on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. In terms of direct costs, British governments spent between 0.2 and 1.3 percent of total annual expenditure on slave trade suppression from 1815 to 1865.[19] Yet the traffic continued in very large scale, especially in the South Atlantic, but also in West Africa and the Caribbean. The major obstacle was that national and colonial governments in these regions were unwilling to take vigorous action against the trade. As Richard Huzzey has noted, British efforts were also complicated by its unwillingness to overtly violate the sovereignty of European and American powers, such as Portugal and Spain, whose colonies, Angola and Cuba, were deeply involved in the traffic, as well as the US. The British government was also concerned, albeit to lesser degree, with Brazilian sovereignty.[20] A final complication was US designs on Cuba. Britain was wary of America's growing influence in the Caribbean and was alarmed by attempts by the US government and creole exiles to purchase or even annex Cuba from Spain in the 1840s and 1850s. London was therefore anxious not to weaken the Iberian power by pushing them too hard on suppression.[21]

These constraints frustrated Britain's activist foreign policy leaders and helped guide them towards subtle, but penetrating methods of suppression from the 1830s.[22] Palmerston, who was Foreign Secretary (1830-34, 1835-41, 1846-51) and later Prime Minister, (1855-58, 1859-65),

[19] Huzzey, *Freedom Burning*, 43; Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 91-97.
[20] Huzzey, *Freedom Burning*, 51-65.
[21] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 208-240.
[22] Eltis highlights some elements of this shift, see Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 114-6.

dominated British slave trade policy for a generation. An anti-slavery zealot, he authorized the Lagos bombing and was determined to act forcefully against the trade, despite the geopolitical complications.[23] His views were largely supported by the Foreign Office's two senior staff, the Permanent and Parliamentary Under-Secretaries. The Parliamentary Under-Secretary, who was John Wodehouse for much the 1850s, was largely responsible for slave trade matters, although the instinctively Palmerstonian Edmund Hammond was always part of slave trade deliberations in his capacity as Permanent Under-Secretary (1854-1873).[24] William Henry Wylde, who was senior clerk of the Foreign Office's Slave Trade Department (1855-1880), also had strong suppressionist credentials. Wylde was typically the strongest advocate of the spy system during high-level discussions at the Foreign Office.[25]

These officials needed to operate free from outside scrutiny to act on their interventionist inclinations. Confidentiality was essential, not only to prevent the international disputes that could stem from covert operations that were later exposed, but also because parliament and the press were already casting a more critical eye on British suppression policies in the 1840s. The naval campaign, especially, was under fire for being costly and ineffective.[26] It was ironic, then, that parliament unwittingly sponsored the Foreign Office's new tactics through its annual provision of

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[23] On Palmerston's approach compared to other Foreign Secretaries, see Richard Huzzey, *Freedom Burning*, 70-74. See also Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 212-214.

[24] On the two Under-Secretaryships, see Ray Jones, *The Nineteenth-Century Foreign Office: An Administrative History* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1971). For the Permanent Under-Secretary, see Keith Neilson and T.G. Otte, *The Permanent Under-Secretary* (New York: Routledge, 2009). For the division of labor see, Jones, *The Nineteenth-Century Foreign Office*, 12-14. On Hammond, see Neilson and Otte, *The Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs*, 5-31.

[25] On the Slave Trade Department, see Keith Hamilton, "Zealots and Helots: The Slave Trade Department of the Nineteenth-Century Foreign Office," in *Slavery, Diplomacy and Empire*, eds. Hamilton and Salmon, 20-41. For Wylde, see *ibid*, 30-34. For an argument for a "collective mind" at the Foreign Office see, T.G. Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind: The Making of British Foreign Policy, 1865-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[26] See Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 211-221. On the broader "Age of Inquiry" see Neilson, Otte, eds., *The Permanent Under-Secretary*, 8.

the Secret Service Fund (SSF). Established by parliament in the 1820s, the Fund was intended to allow the Foreign Office to carry out secret operations free from parliamentary oversight and public knowledge. The annual allowance ranged from £25,000 to over £50,000, and was administered by the Foreign Office's Permanent Under-Secretary.[27] Although Under-Secretary Hammond destroyed many SSF documents during his tenure, the surviving records show the Foreign Office supported a wide cast of informants and agents across the globe.[28] It hired some for clear political purposes. In 1858, it recruited a spy through Edward Archibald, the British consul in New York.[29] The Foreign Office charged the agent, who is unnamed in the sources, with infiltrating local "Irish clubs." His job was to report on what the Foreign Office called the "disaffected Irish" who were joining the Fenian Brotherhood, a newly-founded Irish independence organization in New York.[30] Although it is unclear how this infiltrator performed, it was the SSF that had given the Foreign Office the resources, and confidentiality, it needed to make the hire.

The adoption of new suppression methods was also aided by the growth of British official representation across the Atlantic basin. As the case from New York indicated, the Foreign Office required help from its overseas representatives to handle its distant agents. These officials, including ministers and the more junior consuls and unpaid vice-consuls, answered directly to the Foreign Office. Charged mainly with facilitating trade and migration, their ranks had swollen over the course of the nineteenth century as British commerce penetrated global markets.[31] By

[27] See Memos and correspondence in HD 3/142, TNA.
[28] On the SSF see Neilson, Otte, eds., *The Permanent Under-Secretary*, 8.
[29] Archibald became British consul in New York on January 1, 1858. Archibald to FO, July 1, 1858, FO5/697. For more on Archibald, who was consul in New York until 1882, see Edith J. Archibald, *Life and Letters of Sir Edward Mortimer Archibald: A Memoir of Fifty Years of Service* (Toronto: George N. Morang, 1924).
[30] Archibald to FO, Dec. 28, 1858, FO5/697. For background on this movement, see Kevin Kenny "American-Irish Nationalism" in Marion Casey and J.J. Lee, eds. *Making the Irish American: History and Heritage of the Irish in the US* (NY: New York University Press, 2006), 289-301.
[31] For the functions and growth of consuls in the nineteenth century, see D.C.M. Platt, *The Cinderella Service: British Consuls since 1825* (London: Longman, 1971), 16-67. On American consuls, see Charles Stuart Kennedy,

midcentury, British representatives were spread throughout the Atlantic basin and in all the major slaving zones. There were ministers or consuls in each of the key departure ports: Rio, New York, Havana, and Cadiz. British officials were much thinner on the ground in the African embarkation zones, but there were consuls in several key slaving ports along the West African coast and also at Luanda, in West Central Africa. Britain also had seven consuls or vice consuls located along Cuba's long shores.[32]

By the mid-nineteenth century, these officials were more tightly connected to the Foreign Office than ever before. Widening and thickening patterns of global trade and migration aided integration. As goods and people moved across the Atlantic basin in increasing scale, ships carried dispatches to and from the Foreign Office with greater frequency. In 1852, for example, a new monthly mail service opened between Liverpool and Fernando Po in response to Britain's growing palm oil trade with West Africa. The Foreign Office used this steamer to correspond with its African consuls. Revolutions in transportation and communication technologies also helped. By midcentury, steamships were replacing sail, cutting the length of transatlantic voyages by up to a half. These innovations, which underpinned what C.A. Bayly has called the global "great acceleration" in the nineteenth century, drew disparate consulates closer to London.[33] Meanwhile, within Britain, Foreign Office mails travelled on the nation's rail network, the most developed in

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The American Consul: A History of the US Consular Service, 1776-1914 (New York: Greenwood, 1990). On the role of consuls in global capitalism see Ferry de Goey, *Consuls and the Institutions of Global Capitalism, 1783–1914* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

[32] There were 22 British consulates in the US, with 11 reporting on ST. See, Edward Hertslet, ed., *Foreign Office List: Forming a Complete Diplomatic and Consular Handbook* (London: Harrison, 1865). On British Vice Consuls, who were, like Pedro, typically foreign nationals, see Platt, *The Cinderella Service*, 37-8.

[33] On the "great acceleration" see C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004), 445-464. For more on these developments, see Jürgen Osterhammel*, The Transformation of the Modern World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Patrick Camiller (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 77-113, 710-729; Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital* (New York: Vintage Books edition, 1996), 48-68; Daniel Headrick, *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981).

the world. By the 1860s, the Slave Trade Department was even receiving and transmitting messages, almost instantaneously, via telegram. The significance of these developments was that the Foreign Office could draw on a vast and increasingly connected network of antislavery agents to help execute its new strategies.

The Foreign Office put these strategies into effect beginning in the 1830s. Alongside spying, the other main tactic involved Secret Service payments to Brazilian nationals to encourage them to take anti-slave trade positions. As David Eltis has highlighted, one of the early recipients was the Brazilian foreign minister, Caetano Mario Lopez Gama, who was in charge of slave trade treaty negotiations with Britain in the 1830s.[34] Another was Leopoldo de Câmara, the port captain of Rio de Janeiro, who was in the pay of British government in 1849. Under Palmerston's instructions, the Foreign Office also funded anti-slave trade newspapers in Brazil, including the Brazilian anti-slave trade society's paper *O Philantropo*, and the Rio daily, *Correio Mercantil*. As Palmerston explained to James Hudson, the British Minister in Rio, these payments were designed to secure "the promotion of anti Slave Trade and anti Slavery principles in Brazil."[35] Playing the role of Consul Archibald in New York, Hudson made the payments to the papers and ensured they were printing what they promised.

The British government supplemented their attack on the Brazilian trade by hiring slave trade spies. The Foreign Office paid informants in Rio and Pernambuco in the 1830s, but the first spy to produce big results was Alcoforado in Rio in the 1840s. The captain of a coasting steamer, Alcoforado claimed to know when slavers were due to leave port and when they would return from Africa. Well aware that Britain would value this information, in the early 1840s, he had already

[34] Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 114-116.
[35] Palmerston to Henry Hudson Oct. 29, 1849, FO84/766. It paid *Correio Mercantil* 100 per year in 1849.

occasionally reported directly to the British Navy patrolling the Brazilian coast and received small payments in return.[36] After several years out of the business, the Foreign Office hired him on a more formal basis in 1849. This time, Hudson played the middle-man, passing Alcoforado's intelligence to the Navy. In return, the Foreign Office promised him fixed rates for captures based on his information. These were £5.10 per ton of the slaver if it was empty, or £5 per ton plus £1.10 per captive if it was not. These rates amounted to ten percent of the total bounties the British government paid its seamen for captured slavers.[37]

Although his notes to Hudson have not survived, Alcoforado was clearly an impressive informant. Commander Grey Skipwith regularly received his intelligence while patrolling the Brazilian coast. In 1850, Skipwith reported to the Admiralty, "[Alcoforado] knows almost to a day when a full vessel is expected on the coast of Brazils and where she will land her cargo, also when and where from, any vessel fitted for slave trading will leave for the Coast of Africa."[38] In total, the Foreign Office attributed 18 British captures to his information and paid him a total of £2659 (about $13,000), in bounties.[39] Since over 170 slavers successfully departed Rio de Janeiro between 1849 and 1851, Alcoforado had not ended the trade as Palmerston later stated to Lord

[36] Memo from Commander Grey Skipwith, ca. Spring 1850, ADM 123/173. On Hudson's descriptions of the spy, see Hudson to Palmerston, Aug. 13, 1849, FO84/765 & Hudson to Palmerston, July 27, FO84/804. During this period his information was reportedly worth 2 or 3 captures per year. The Navy paid him directly, giving him a portion of the bounty money they customarily received from the British government for capturing slavers. This period of employment had ended when Rio's slave traders discovered what he was doing and froze him out of their operations. When he approached Hudson in 1849 they were apparently no longer concerned by him.

[37] On Britain's hiring of Alcoforado in 1849, and earlier work in the 1840s, see Hudson to Palmerston, July 27, 1850, FO84/804. For bounties paid to British and US crews see George Brooks, *Yankee Traders, Old Coasters & African Middlemen: A History of Legitimate American Trade with West Africa in the Nineteenth Century* (Boston: Boston University Press, 1970), 109. Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 114.

[38] Memo from Commander Grey Skipwith, ca. Spring 1850, ADM 123/173.

[39] For payments, see Hudson to Palmerston, July 27, 1850, FO84/804; Earl Granville to Henry Southern, Jan. 31, 1852, Earl Malmesbury to Southern, May 3, 1852, Malmesbury to Southern, Nov. 11, 1852, Malmesbury to Southern, Dec. 20, 1852, FO84/877; Clarendon to Jerningham, Mar. 24, 1853, FO84/910.

Russell, but by raising slave traders' risk and leaving a light footprint, Alcoforado had shown that spying could be an effective and diplomatically sensitive tool of suppression.[40]

Buoyed by Alcoforado's success, the Foreign Office considered applying the spy strategy to the highly robust slave trade to Cuba after 1850. One of the biggest problems Britain faced in this traffic was the slave traders' use of the American flag. Intercepting slavers off the Brazilian coast had been relatively straightforward because most vessels sailed under Brazilian or Portuguese colors, which Britain was permitted to police by treaty. By contrast, the vast majority of voyages to Cuba took place aboard American vessels, which Britain was not permitted to detain. To Wylde, at the Slave Trade Department, spies offered a way around the problem. Recognizing the real owners of the slavers were typically not US citizens, but Cubans or Portuguese, he argued American law did not entitle them to the US flag. The vessels were, in his view, pirates, and as such, were subject to seizure by any nation. Thus, he wrote to his colleagues, "if we can ascertain on good authority that [the vessel] has been actually sold to the Cuban [or other non-US] Slave Traders, our own cruisers can deal with her."[41] Predicting objections from the American government to such seizures, Wylde also suggested the WAS pass spies' intelligence to the US Navy, which could intercept the slavers itself. In these ways, he believed, "the money paid for the information would be well spent." In fact, he estimated, "a few thousand pounds spent [on spies] would not amount to a third of the annual cost of one cruiser, and would be more effective than half a dozen."[42]

[40] *Voyages*: http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/IHBaZ5v0. On the blockade see Leslie Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave* Trade, 242-363.
[41] Wylde Memo, May 26, 1859, FO84/1082.
[42] Wylde Memo, May 26, 1859, FO84/1082.

The success of Wylde's ambitious plan depended, however, on the ability of the Foreign Office to hire good informants such as Alcoforado. Although Britain never advertised the job, its well-known stance against the slave trade seems to have had the same effect. One of the prospective hires was James Groth in New York. Groth had been born in England and was the former owner of a secondhand furniture store in Manhattan. In 1858, he presented himself to Archibald alleging that several slavers were about to set sail from New York. Groth's rather lame pitch was that he had supplied a slaver with a medicine chest several years ago. Surmising that Groth actually knew very little about New York's booming trade, Archibald advised the Foreign Office against the hire. In his view, Groth's information was "founded in a great measure on very insufficient information, if not on mere suspicion."[43] The British-born Charles Edwards, who was legal counsel to the British consulate in New York, described another problem to Archibald: Groth was currently unemployed and lived "in the neighborhood of the lowest class of Catholic Irish."[44] Edwards' comment suggested British officials screened candidates, at least in part, by their own perceptions of their social status. His impression of Groth would likely have been endorsed in London, where underlying assumptions about the unreliability of the poor ran deep. According to an 1850 Treasury Committee report, the Foreign Office specifically excluded lower classes from clerkships because of their perceived propensity to share state secrets.[45]

The issue of trust was made even more thorny by the fact that many prospective informants were closely tied to the slave trade. The steamer captain, Alcoforado, was one example. Both before and during his tenure as a spy, Brazilian traffickers hired him to transport newly arrived captives along the coast near Rio. José Barreto, a Portuguese informant to Consul Benjamin

[43] Archibald to Malmesbury, Oct. 9, 1858, FO84/1059.
[44] Edwards to Archibald, Sept. 20, 1859 enc. in Archibald to Malmesbury, Oct. 9, 1858, FO84/1059.
[45] See Appendix B in Jones, *The Nineteenth Century Foreign Office*, 151-152.

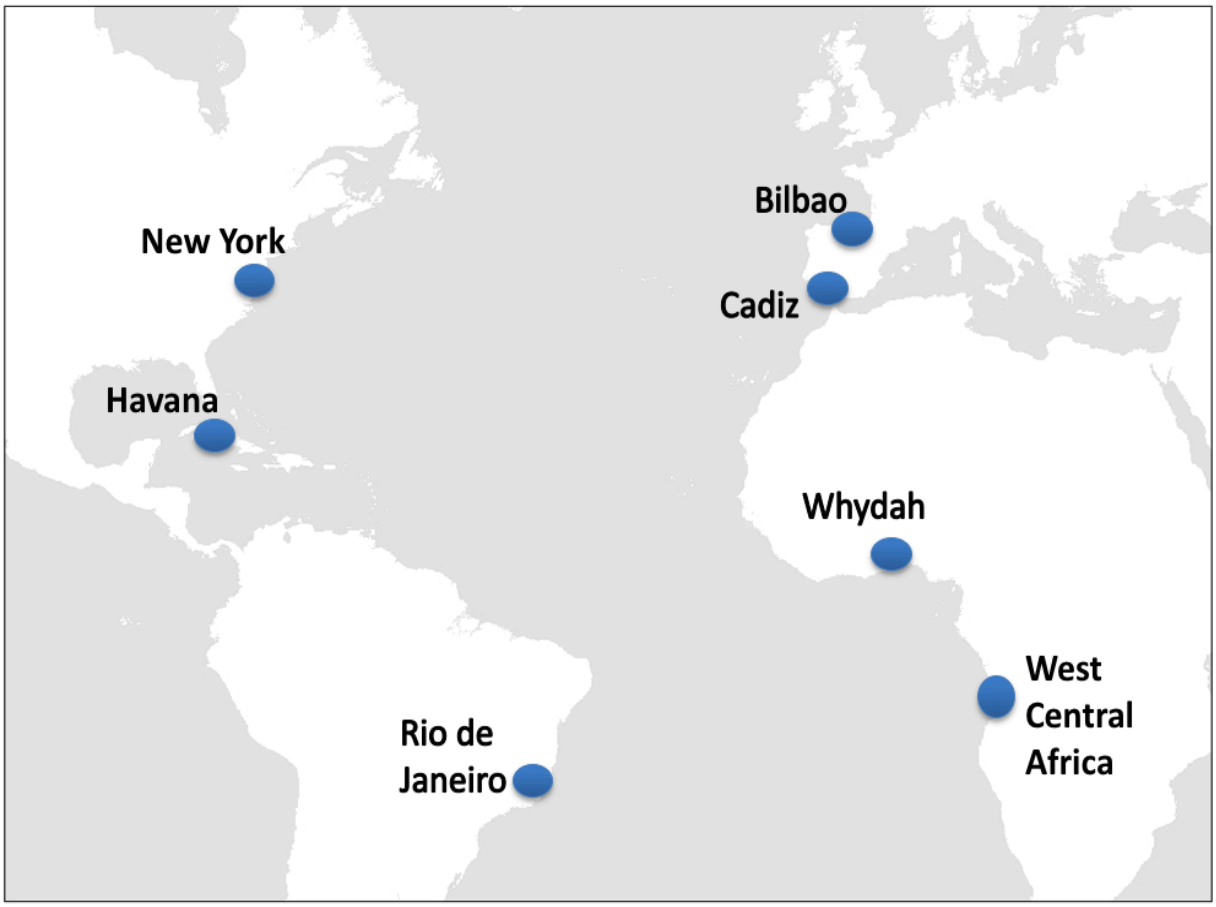
Campbell in Ouidah, also worked for local traffickers. Francisco Rovirosa, a Spaniard living in Cuba, was one of the island's principal traffickers when he offered intelligence to Consul Joseph Crawford in Havana in the 1860s. The continued involvement of many spies in the slave trade, even during their tenure as spies, created uneasiness, and even disgust, amongst British officials. Aside from the offense it caused to British officials steeped in anti-slavery ideology, it called into question their basic allegiances. It may have been why Hudson wrote to Wylde in 1859, saying, "informers, as we all know, are an abominable race."[46] Yet, the Foreign Office also recognized that these individuals were effective precisely because they were immersed in the trade. Even Hudson, who never trusted informers, believed that the slave trade could not be crushed "save thro efficient informers."[47] In many cases, the Foreign Office simply held its nose and took the intelligence.

After the Foreign Office applied its filters, it made financial offers to successful applicants. To spies it believed would provide good intelligence on a consistent basis, it offered formal contracts that linked pay to performance. Sanchez (New York), Alcoforado (Rio), and Rovirosa (Havana), all secured these contracts. They amounted to 10 percent on every slaver captured on their information. To make up for the uncertainty of cruisers actually capturing the vessels in question, the Foreign Office also promised annual retaining fees of £400. This sum would serve as a minimum salary. The Foreign Office also determined to renew contracts annually, meaning it could terminate them if the trade subsided. The Foreign Office did retain Alcoforado, and a second Rio spy named Brito, however, on a combined annual salary of £600-700 throughout the 1850s, in case the Brazilian trade made a resurgence.[48] Aside from these formal contracts, the Foreign

[46] Hudson to Wylde, Aug. 22, 1859, FO84/1095.
[47] James Hudson to Wylde, Aug. 22, 1859, FO84/1095.
[48] James Hudson to Wylde, Aug. 22, 1859, FO84/1095

Office also offered large sums for good information on particular voyages. Before Palmerston instructed Crawford to offer the 10 percent rate to Rovirosa, the consul gave him $799 for specific information about a recent voyage.[49] The Foreign Office also gave smaller cash payments to informants where the trade was less intense. In Santander, in the Basque Country, Lt. Leopold March, the British vice-consul, paid informants from an £100 spy budget in the late 1850s.[50]

Figure 4.1. *Locations of major British slave trade spies, 1849-1866*



[49] John V. Crawford to William Henry Wylde, Aug. 25, 1864, Oct. 4, 1865, WYL/27/33-34, WFP.
[50] Wylde Memo, Dec. 20, 1859, FO84/1082; "Pensions and allowances paid out of Secret Service Fund" June 29, 1859, HD3/27; "Statement of Annual Charges on the Secret Service Fund," Nov. 9, 1865, HD3/33. Foreign Office to John M. Brackenbury, Mar. 26, 1863, FO84/1203; Dunlop to Wylde, Jan 28, 1865, FO84/1241. It in unclear if some informants such as Barreto received any secret service money at all.

As the Foreign Office extended these offers, its spy network gradually expanded to include every slaving zone in the Atlantic basin (see Figure 4.1). In the main disembarkation zone, Cuba, Britain had a least three spies after 1850. They included Rovirosa in Havana, Laureano Thomes, a school teacher in Bahia Honda, and an unnamed informant in Pinar del Río, in the far west of the island.[51] Britain also had spies in the trade's shipping hub, New York. In the early 1850s, when the first Portuguese slave traders started arriving in Manhattan, consul Anthony Barclay wasted no time in hiring a spy to tail them.[52] In 1859, his successor, Archibald, hired Sanchez, the most prolific of all British spies. Coverage was not quite as impressive in Africa. Edmund Gabriel, the British consul in Luanda, took occasional soundings from informants on the large West Central African trade, although his efforts were limited by his location, hundreds of miles from the major embarkation zone near the Congo River.[53] On the other hand, in the Bight of Benin, the embarkation zone for 13 percent of captives after 1850, Consul Campbell occasionally received intelligence from Barreto and another Portuguese, Carvalho, a decade later.[54] In Europe, the Foreign Office paid spies in the Basque Country and Cadiz when their ports became major outfitting centers in the late 1850s and early 1860s. In Brazil, Alcoforado and Brito remained on standby.[55] As the number and spread of these informants show, spying had become a major tool of British suppression.

[51] For Thomes, see Crawford to FO, May 30, 1853, FO84/905.
[52] He put a 'tail' on Portuguese, Gaspar José da Motta, immediately after he appeared in Manhattan in 1854. John Crampton to Foreign Office, Mar. 30 & Apr. 10, FO84/948.
[53] Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 114
[54] Campbell to FO, Dec 19, 1854, FO84/950; ADM 123/184: 1862-1865.
[55] James Hudson to Wylde, Aug. 22, 1859, FO84/1095

Emilio Sanchez and the motives of a spy

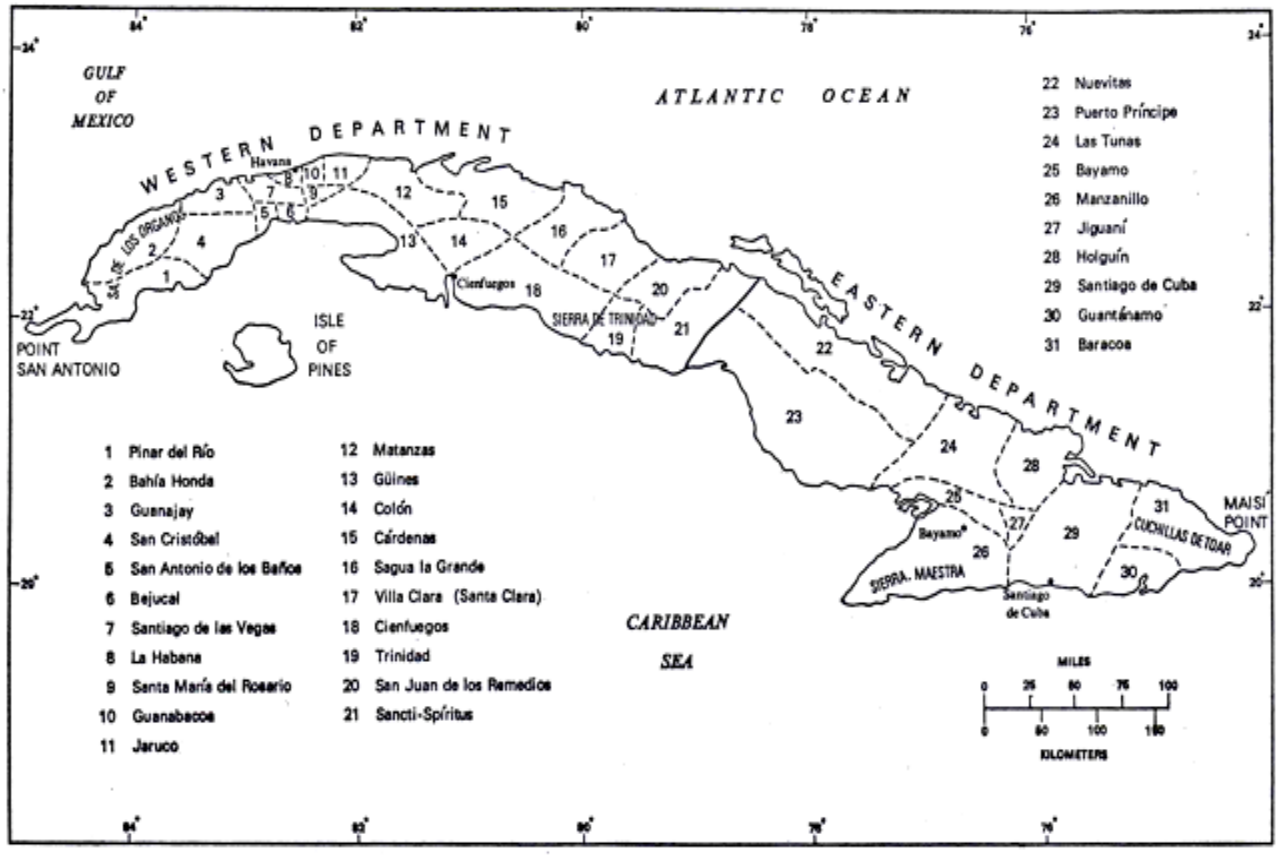
Britain's most effective spy, Emilio Sanchez, was born in Havana in 1821. His family had deep and distinguished Cuban roots.[56] In the sixteenth century, his forbearer, Mateo Sanchez, arrived in Havana from Yucatan, where he had been governor. By the late seventeenth century, the core of the family had relocated three hundred miles east of Havana to the small regional city of Puerto Príncipe (see Figure 4.2). Although it had been one of the first places sighted and settled by Old World migrants, this part of Cuba remained relatively underpopulated and isolated in the eighteenth century compared to the Havana region. The Sanchezes were nevertheless one of its more prominent families. Two of Emilio's ancestors were mayors of Puerto Príncipe.[57] His grandfather, Pedro Sanchez y Boza, was Postmaster.[58] His father, another Bernabé, was a Second Lieutenant in the Royal Guards and was decorated for his service in the Peninsular War in Spain (1808-1814). In 1813, he was considered worthy of marrying Joaquina Dolz, a well-heeled daughter of an elite Havana family.[59]

As Joaquina and Bernabé welcomed Emilio into the world, sugar production was transforming Cuba's economy and society. Up to the mid-eighteenth century, the island's economy depended on tobacco cultivation, ranching, and subsistence farming. Its population was predominantly of European descent, although there were large minorities of African and Afro-

[56] Sanchez's full name was Emilio Francisco Sanchez y Dolz. His place of birth is noted in his marriage record. See *Massachusetts, Marriage Records, 1840-1915.* Accessed via ancestry.com, Mar. 23, 2016.
[57] They were Bernabé Sanchez-Pereira y Aguero (d.1760) and Bernabé Sanchez-Pereira y Zayas-Bazán (1796). Cruz y Mallén, *Historia de Familias*, 344-5.
[58] Cruz y Mallén, *Historia de Familias*, 354.
[59] For more on Bernabé's military service, see Santa Cruz y Mallén, *Historia de Familias Cubanas,* 354. Bernabé died sometime before 1831, when Emilio was still a boy. See Escribanías, Leg. 639, No. 10, ANC. For the genealogy of the Dolz family, see AHN, Universidades, 664-1, Exp.18.

Figure 4.2 Map of Cuba, 1860, by department and jurisdiction.

Nuevitas (22) and Puerto Principe (23) were the two largest jurisdictions in the island's Eastern Department. Matanzas (12) was the most intensive sugar producing region of Cuba.



Source: Franklin Knight, *Slave Society in Cuba*, 4.

Cuban slaves and free people of color. These patterns began to change in the late eighteenth century as Cuban planters, merchants, and the colonial administration capitalized on the island's abundance of fertile land and the collapse of sugar production in San Domingue by slowly turning the island over to slave-grown sugar.[60] To support their endeavors, slave ships brought thousands

[60] For the growth of the sugar industry and changes in Cuba society during this period, see Manuel Moreno Fraginals, *The Sugar Mill: The Socioeconomic Complex of Sugar in Cuba, 1760-1860*, trans. Cedric Belfrage (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976); Franklin Knight, *Slave Society in Cuba During the Nineteenth Century* (University of Wisconsin, 1970), 3-58; Laird W. Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society in the Nineteenth Century: The Social*

of African captives to the cane fields each year. The influx continued unabated after Spain's formal abolition of the trade in 1820 and it was largely thanks to this traffic that Cuba became the world's leading sugar producer later that decade.[61] By then, sugar production was already deeply entrenched in much of western Cuba, and by midcentury, it had encroached on the eastern portion of the island.[62] Puerto Príncipe and its neighbor, Nuevitas, were the jurisdictions touched least by the sugar boom, but they were still effected in important ways. Many new *ingenios* appeared in both jurisdictions and previously small slave populations grew substantially. Meanwhile, railroad-building and maritime commerce expanded, helping connect the region's sugar, molasses, and rum to markets home and abroad.[63]

Although the sugar boom never fully took hold in their home region, the Sanchezes grasped the opportunities it offered. In the 1840s, the eldest of Emilio's three brothers, Pedro, became a major stockholder in a railroad line that connected the towns of Puerto Príncipe and Nuevitas, the jurisdiction's main port.[64] He was also one of the region's major landholders and slave owners, owning 200 slaves by 1869. Many of these slaves labored on his sugar estate, *Desengaños*, in

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and Economic History of Monoculture in Matanzas (Princeton: NJ, Princeton University Press, 1990). For the role of Haiti in the shift to sugar, see Ada Ferrer, *Freedom's Mirror: Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014). For much smaller scale sugar production and slavery in Cuba in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, see David Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean 1570-1640* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, 2016), 192-197.

[61] For the growth of the slave trade, see David Murray, *Odious Commerce: Britain, Spain and the Abolition of the Cuban slave trade* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), and José Luciano Franco, *Comercio clandestine de esclavos* (Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1980).

[62] One detailed analysis of Cuba's developing sugar economy is Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society*.

[63] On the growth of Nuevitas's sugar industry, slave population, and exterior trade, see Jacobo de la Pezuela, *Diccionario geográfico, estadístico, histórico, de la isla de Cuba*, vol 4 (Imprenta del Banco Industrial y Mercantil: Madrid, 1866), 133-148 & Carlos Rebello, *Estados relativos a la producción azucarera de la Isla de Cuba* (Havana: n.p., 1860), 101. For railroad expansion in Cuba, see Oscar Zanetti and Alejandro Garcia, trans F. Knight and Mary Todd, *Sugar & Railroads: A Cuban History, 1837-1959* (English translation, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 59-63 & 78-102.

[64] República de Cuba, *Jurisprudence del tribunal supremo en materia civil*, vol. 9 (Habana, Rambla y Souza, 1908), 104-114.

Nuevitas.[65] Pedro was also a merchant who focused on foreign markets. Reflecting the growing trading links between Cuba and the US, his brig, the *Pedro Sanchez Dolz*, carried staples, lumber, and manufactured goods between Nuevitas and New York.[66] A second brother, José, also capitalized on the growing Cuba-America trade. In 1843, he briefly secured the US consular post at Nuevitas and oversaw American commerce on behalf of the State Department.[67] A third brother, Adolfo, was also strongly tied to the US. He too was a merchant. He lived in Philadelphia during the 1840s and became a US citizen in New York 1854. By the late nineteenth century, he was US Deputy Consul in Havana. [68]

Emilio Sanchez equaled his brothers' mobility, enterprise, and trading acumen. He immigrated to the US as a boy, and in 1843, at the age of 22, he was naturalized as an American citizen in New Orleans.[69] He began his career as an overseas merchant in New Orleans in the 1840s, before moving to New York in 1850.[70] Operating from an office in the shipping district of

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[65] Pedro also owned *Santa Rosalia* in Puerto Príncipe, which he used mainly for pasture. The average number of slaves per *ingenio* in Puerto Príncipe and Nuevitas region in 1862 was 47. Carlos Rebello's 1860 census of Cuban estates lists Carlos Varano Torres as the owner of *Desengaños* and Doña Dolores M. de Xiques as the owner of *Santa Rosalia*. See Rebello, *Estados relativos,* 101-2; For Sanchez's land and slaves in 1869, see Sanchez to Comandante General del Departamento Central, Nuevitas, Aug. 5 1869 in AHN, Ultramar, Legajo 4356, No.21; See also, Rebecca Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 22.

[66] For one New York trip, see *NYT* July 17, 1860. For Pedro's inter-colonial Puerto Rican trade, see *NYT* May 28, 1861. He also advertised for passengers to sail aboard New York bounds vessels. See the Cuban newspaper, *El Fanal*, Mar. 20, 1856.

[67] For José's designation as a merchant, see New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957, M237, Roll 42, List number 395, Line 1, NARA. On his role as a consul, see José Sanchez to Daniel Webster, Apr 7, 1843, T588, SDR, NARA. On Cuba-US trade and migration, see Louis A. Perez, Jr., *Cuba and the US: Ties of Singular Intimacy* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1997, 2nd ed), 1-54; Roland Ely, "The Old Cuba Trade: Highlights and Case Studies of Cuban-American Interdependence during the Nineteenth Century," *Business History Review*, Vol. 38, No. 4, (Winter, 1964), 456-478; Knight, *Slave Society in Cuba*, 43-5.

[68] For traces of his time in Philadelphia see *Philly Public Ledger* July 18, 1843, and José Sanchez to Daniel Webster, Apr 7, 1843, T588. For his naturalization see Mar. 16, 1854, Court of Common Pleas for the City and County of New York (1-801), Petitions for Naturalization, 1794-1906, RG 85, NARA New York City. On his later career as Deputy Consul see *NYT*, July 25, 1898.

[69] According to the 1900 US Census, Emilio immigrated to the US when he was 7 years old. For information on his naturalization, see *New York Herald*, Nov. 30, 1858.

[70] For traces of his career in New Orleans, see *Times Picayune*, Dec. 12, 1846. For his move to New York in 1850, see his family's appearance in the New York State Census, 1855, New York City, Ward 20, E.D. 2.

Lower Manhattan, he established himself as a shipbroker and a commission merchant focusing on the hispanic markets of Cuba, Mexico, and Spain. The latter task entailed linking distant buyers and sellers and earning a small percentage on their transactions.[71] These labors yielded a moderate income. By 1859, Sanchez was earning $3,000 a year; more than most New Yorkers, but far less than Manhattan's big Cuba traders such as Moses Taylor, who owned and operated their own vessels.[72] Sanchez's home reflected his income and status. He lived with his Massachusetts-born wife, Susan, and their two young girls in a brick house in New York's twentieth ward. Their neighbors were lawyers, grocers, shoemakers, and physicians.[73] Like Emilio, many were immigrants, and were trying to make their way in the largest, busiest, and most ethnically diverse city in the US.[74]

When Sanchez approached Archibald in the early spring of 1859, he brought many qualities that marked him as a useful spy. He first made contact through an intermediary whom Archibald described only as an "estimable English gentleman."[75] Sanchez likely used an intermediary mainly to hide his identity from local slave traders – something he guarded fiercely

[71] See, for example, his clearing vessels for Barcelona and Cadiz and his intermediary role between the Mexican government and the Dupont firm of Delaware in *NYT*, Oct. 21, 1851 and Sanchez to E. I. Dupont de Nemours, Aug. 20, 1849 and July 25, 1851, Hagley Digital Archives.
[72] For his income, see Sanchez to Archibald, July 12, 1859, FO84/1086. I have used http://www.measuringworth.com/exchangeglobal/ to convert from dollar to pounds. For Moses Taylor, see Roland Taylor Ely, "From Counting-House to Cane Field: Moses Taylor and the Cuban Sugar Planter in the Reign of Isabel II, 1833-1868," (Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University, 1958).
[73] The marriage took place Mar. 14, 1851 in Boston. See Massachusetts Town and Vital Records, 1620-1988. Susan Farley was a daughter of the Ipswich, Massachusetts Farley family, which had traded between New England and the Caribbean for several generations. For an overview of the Farley family see the University of Michigan Library's Farley Papers finding aid: http://quod.lib.umich.edu/c/clementsmss/umich-wcl-M-2813far?view=text. Emilio and Susan's daughters, Panchita and Emilia, were born in 1852, and 1855, in New York City. See New York State Census, 1855, New York City, Ward 20, E.D. 2.
[74] For their neighbors, see *ibid*. For New York immigration, especially the huge midcentury influx of Irish and Germans, see Robert Ernst, *Immigrant Life in New York City, 1825-1863* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1949). For a detailed overview of New York during this period, see Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 620-1039.
[75] Archibald to Malmesbury, May 3, 1859, FO84/1086

throughout his tenure as a spy – but his choice of go-between may have carried a certain gravitas. That Sanchez held a steady and respectable job was also in his favor, given the prejudices of the Foreign Office. His best assets, however, were his knowledge of New York's merchant community and his ties with Cuba. He displayed them during his initial meetings with Archibald. In March 1859, the consul reported glowingly to the Foreign Office: "through his connections and correspondents in Cuba as well as from his acquaintance with parties engaged in the trade with Spain and Cuba, [Sanchez] possesses peculiar facilities for obtaining information [about] the slave trade."[76]

Sanchez and his fellow spies were always preoccupied by security. Speaking on his behalf to the Foreign Office, Archibald said Sanchez would be at "great risk [from slave traders] should he be discovered."[77] It was a common concern for spies throughout the Atlantic basin. In 1854, the Ouidah spy, Barreto, reported to Consul Campbell that he was now being "looked on as a spy." Sensing that his life was now in "peril" he fled the town.[78] Consul Dunlop in Cadiz was more explicit about the perceived threats. In 1865, he complained that spies were unwilling to come forward because they were "all afraid of being stabbed."[79] In some regions, the connections between the slave traders and government officials were such that it was hard to tell who was the greater threat to British informants. In Bahia Honda, the school teacher, Laureano Thomes, had the misfortune of having his spy letters intercepted by the colonial government. According to Consul Crawford, he was then thrown in prison for seven months "upon a false charge of some offense against the government." When he emerged from jail, he "begg[ed]" Crawford to get him

[76] Archibald to Malmesbury, March 29, 1859, FO84/1086.
[77] Archibald to FO, July 11, 1859, FO84/1086.
[78] Barreto to Campbell enc. in Campbell to FO, Dec. 19, 1854, FO84/950.
[79] Dunlop to Wylde, May 8, 1865, FO84/1241.

"to Mexico where he said he had some relatives, as his prospects had been ruined." Crawford paid his ticket to Veracruz and gave him $20 to help him on his way.[80]

Archibald and Sanchez devised many strategies to keep his work confidential. One ploy was for Sanchez to write to Archibald anonymously and mainly in cipher. This strategy meant that his notes could be understood only by staff at the New York consulate. To prevent any obvious association with the consulate, Sanchez would send these missives through trusted intermediaries. For his part, Archibald committed not to mention Sanchez's name in his correspondence with the Foreign Office. He did so only on one occasion, when he recommended Sanchez for hire. He also promised Sanchez that his intelligence would never be used in evidence against slave traders. As an added precaution, he kept Sanchezes' correspondence at his home, rather than at his office in the consulate.[81]

Sanchez never explained why he took on the risky job of being a spy in his extensive correspondence with Archibald, but three reasons are particularly compelling. The most immediate motive was revenge for the tumultuous *Haidee* affair.[82] The saga had begun in 1857 when Sanchez was approached by Juan Ceballos, a wealthy and respected sugar importer in New York. Ceballos proposed Sanchez purchase a ship, the *Haidee*, from a Portuguese merchant, Inocêncio Abranches,

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[80] Crawford to FO, May 30, 1853, FO84/905. Cuba was clearly an inhospitable place for anti-slave trade agents; the George Canning Backhouse, the British judge on the Court of Mixed Commission in Havana was murdered in an apparent botched robbery in 1854. Backhouse's wife, Grace, was sure slavers had organized a hit on her husband. The Foreign Office paid informants to verify her claim, but they found no concrete evidence to support it. Luis Martínez-Fernández, *Fighting slavery in the Caribbean: the life and times of a British family in nineteenth-century Havana* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), chp 8. On other occasions, British officials exposed their informants to risk. In 1851, Hudson, unmasked Alcoforado to the city's Chief of Police. Hudson claimed he did so to help the local authorities, not the slave traders, but a Brazilian government minister, who sympathetic to the traffic, soon leaked his name to the public. The Brazilian government nevertheless paid him a further £2,500, though it is unclear what work he did in return. For payments from the Brazilian government and the leak, see Hudson to Palmerston, Apr 11, 1851, FO84/844.

[81] Archibald to Wylde, Mar. 31, 1862, FO84/1172; Archibald to FO, July 11, 1859, FO84/1086.

[82] See Sanchez's "Memo" in Archibald to Malmesbury, May 3, 1859, FO84/1086.

and then accept a request from another Portuguese, Antonio Botelho, to charter it. According to Ceballos, Botelho would take the *Haidee* to Spain, and sell its cargo, along with vessel. Sanchez, who was in line to receive a commission on the cargo and a profit from the sale of his ship, agreed to the proposal, and Botelho departed for Spain. When Botelho arrived, however, he refitted the *Haidee* and proceeded on a slaving voyage, heading first to the Loango Coast of West Central Africa and then to Cuba. A few months later, news of the voyage reached District Attorney John McKeon in New York, and Sanchez was indicted by a grand jury for violating the anti-slave trade Act of 1820. No American had ever been executed on this charge, but a conviction technically carried the death penalty. Fortunately for Sanchez, the jury acquitted him, although it was no thanks to Botelho, who was long-gone from New York, or to Ceballos, who refused to help Sanchez during the trial. Ceballos even told the beleaguered Sanchez he had "rejoiced" at the good fortune of the *Haidee* investors. Sanchez made his own views clear to Archibald, branding Botelho and his friends "scoundrels" for attaching "disgrace" to his name and causing him "great distress of mind."[83]

Although Sanchez presented himself as an innocent, duped merchant, this portrayal is questionable. There is a certainly a chance Sanchez knew what he was getting himself into when he chartered the vessel to Botelho. Several Portuguese merchants, including the notorious Cunha Reis, had recently been charged with slave trade offenses in New York and although the charges were always dropped, or the defendant was found not guilty, the association between the traffic and New York's small Portuguese merchant community was clear.[84] Sanchez, an active merchant

[83] *Ibid*.
[84] For this connection, see *New York Tribune*, Mar. 19, 1856. Ernst counts only 1,176 Portuguese natives arriving in New York between May 5, 1847 and December 31, 1860. By contrast, the Irish and German figures are 1,107,034 and 979,575, respectively. See Ernst, *Immigrant Life*, 188.

in Lower Manhattan, would probably have made the connection. He certainly would not have been the first US citizen in New York to knowingly dabble in the trade. The shipbroker J.B. Gagner and the Cuban-born merchants, Mora brothers, also chartered their vessels to slave traders, and probably received large fees for their services.[85] On the other hand, New York was an extremely large port by midcentury and Sanchez could not have known everyone, especially recent arrivals such as Botelho. Moreover, Ceballos, a respected merchant, had vouched for him. Furthermore, there was nothing intrinsically peculiar about the transaction. Trading vessels internationally was commonplace in the Atlantic basin, and as a shipbroker, Sanchez did it on a regular basis. Certainly, Archibald seemed to accept Sanchez's innocence. After grilling him about the incident, he reported to the Foreign Office "[Sanchez] has impressed me very favourably as to his character."[86]

Whether Sanchez had knowingly participated in the slave trade or not, many prospective agents shared his desire to get even. In June 1859, a Rhode Island slave ship captain, Edward Townsend, approached Archibald with a startling offer. His plan was to take command of a slaver in New York, sail it to the African coast, and give it up to a British cruiser. Townsend's apparent change of heart was linked to the voyage of the slaver *Echo*, which he had captained the previous year. Near the end of this voyage, the US Navy had intercepted the vessel and put Townsend on trial in Key West. Although he was acquitted of all charges, he was angry at the voyage investors. According to Archibald, his new scheme was driven not by "shame[,] but from a sense of injury done by the principals who had abandoned him during [his] trial."[87] Another slave trader, Rovirosa,

[85] See the third section of this chapter.
[86] Archibald to FO, May 3, 1859, FO84/1086.
[87] Archibald to Malmesbury, June 14, 1859, FO84/1086. The Foreign Office was inclined to approve his offer, but it ultimately rejected it after protests from the Admiralty, which feared Townsend would not go through with the plan, and might even expose it to public. For Townsend's proposal and its rejection, see Archibald to FO, June 14, 1859;

was also out for revenge. In 1864, John V. Crawford, the Acting British Consul in Havana, wrote to the Foreign Office about Rovirosa's motives. "Philanthropy is all out of the question," he said, "[Rovirosa] is actuated by motives of private vengeance."[88] Although the Foreign Office rejected Townsend's suggestion on the grounds it was unworkable, it accepted Rovirosa as a spy.

Sanchez's second motive was plainly financial. Although most, if not all, informants expected to be paid, Sanchez's pecuniary requirements were especially pressing. The *Haidee* affair had jeopardized his financial standing. He had purchased the ship for $20,000 in 1857, and his plan to make a profit by selling it in Spain fell apart when the slave traders had forgone the sale. They had even sunk the *Haidee* near Montauk, New York, after the voyage took place, so there was no chance of reclaiming it. For a while, Sanchez hoped he would be informally indemnified by the *Haidee* investors, who had enjoyed impressive returns from the voyage. Julián Zulueta and José Plá, the main investors in Cuba, did make promises to that effect, but in the end they gave him nothing. As he explained to Archibald, the whole ordeal had left him "circumscribed in his pecuniary affairs."[89]

Spying for the Foreign Office promised to improve his position markedly. After Archibald's warm recommendation in the spring of 1859, the Foreign Secretary, Lord

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Wylde FO Memo, June 27, 1859, with remarks by Romaine of the Admiralty and Foreign Secretary Lord Malmesbury, June 29, 1859. For the *Echo* case, see John Harris, "An Argument in Proof of Human Depravity: The Human Story of the *Echo* Africans," (MA Thesis, Queen's University Belfast, 2008).

[88] John V. Crawford to Wylde, Aug. 25, 1864, WYL/27/33-34, WFP. In Cuba, Pezuela's administration knew many informants were not "models of virtue[,]" but wanted to "revenge themselves." Government Secretary to Crawford in Crawford to Clarendon, July 25, 1854, FO84/937. For an American example in 1810, see David Head, "Slave Smuggling by Foreign Privateers: The Illegal Slave Trade and the Geopolitics of the Early Republic," *JER* 33 (2013): 488. It was likely for these reasons that Crawford told the the Foreign Office, "I find it extremely difficult to obtain information of the slavers movements which can be relied upon." Crawford to FO, Mar. 28 & Apr. 27 1854, FO84/936.

[89] Archibald to FO, May 3, 1859, FO84/1086.

Malmesbury, offered Sanchez the following contract, based on the Alcoforado scale.[90] In return for his information, the Foreign Office offered him a guaranteed minimum annual income of £400 (about $2,000). This figure could rise substantially if his information led to voyages being broken up. The Foreign Office, which envisaged passing some of Sanchez's information to US authorities, offered him £50 for every voyage disrupted in US ports or captured by the US Navy.[91] For vessels intercepted by the British Africa Squadron, he stood to make much more: £5.10 per ton of the ship if it was empty, and £1.10 per ton plus £5 per captive if it was carrying slaves.[92] The Foreign Office even drew up a typical scenario to show Sanchez how much he could make. For a British-captured slaver of 200 tons and with 500 slaves, he would net £280 ($1,400).[93] This sum represented almost half his regular annual salary. Given the dozens of vessels leaving US ports in 1859, the job promised to pay extremely well.[94]

Sanchez also had a third, political, reason for becoming a spy. His Cuban roots were key. Although the island's sugar boom had benefitted many creole families, including the Sanchezes, some feared that the large number of Africans arriving through the slave trade increased the likelihood of a bloody, Haitian-style slave rebellion. At the very least, it 'impaired' the white character of the island. These creoles certainly blamed slave traders (many of whom hailed from Spain) for the influx of Africans, but they also criticized the Spanish government for turning a blind eye to the traffic. Exacerbating creole frustrations, Spain had instituted more direct control

[90] The ten percent rate on British captures remained the same, but Sanchez's contract included an annual minimum salary and provisions for ships captured by American cruisers.
[91] Wylde Memo, May 26, 1859, FO84/1082.
[92] Wylde explicitly drew on the Rio spy's rates in his memo on Sanchez's pay. See Wylde Memo, May 26, 1859, FO84/1082.
[93] Malmesbury to Archibald, Aug. 6, 1859, FO84/1086.
[94] For further detail on his pay and prospects, see Archibald to Malmesbury, Mar 8 & 29, 1859, FO84/1086; Malmesbury to Archibald, June 10, 1859, FO84/1086.

over the island in the 1830s, hoping to shore up what remained of their American empire after the shattering revolutionary era. In doing so, it had eroded the traditional autonomy that creoles had enjoyed over Cuban affairs. The new dispensation was therefore marked by centralized, non-representative rule, and by what many creoles saw as the 'Africanization' of the island through the slave trade.

José Antonio Saco was the most prominent critic of the Spanish government. An elite creole from Bayamo in eastern Cuba, he was a prolific writer and was expelled from the island for undermining Spanish rule in 1834. In his writings, Saco depicted Spain as a corrupt overlord that encouraged the slave trade in order to force creoles into submission. In his view, Madrid calculated that creoles would cling to Spanish rule because they feared a race war against a rising population of Africans and Afro-Cubans. Saco could see the logic in this calculation. He believed slave rebellion was a very real threat and opposed abolition ostensibly because it could unleash such a conflict. To Saco, the best way out of the bind was to push Spain to suppress the slave traffic. Once suppression had been effected, the slave population would gradually 'whiten' over time, and creoles would secure greater autonomy within the Spanish empire. In other words, in Saco's mind, opposition to the slave trade, support for slavery, and a commitment to creole rights, all went hand in hand.[95]

Although the Sanchezes never openly identified with Saco's position, their associational and occupational history suggest they broadly shared his views. Emilio's father, Bernabé, is an

[95] On Saco, see Olga Portuondo Zúñiga, *José Antonio Saco: eternamente polémico* (Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente, 2005); Arthur Corwin, Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967); Christopher Schmidt-Nowara, *Empire and Antislavery: Spain, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, 1833-1874* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1999), 18-21; Stephen Silverstein, "'La relación de sus males, [y] el medio de curarlos': Trans-American Models of Slave Labor Organization in José Antonio Saco's *Análisis de una obra sobre el Brasil*," *Dirāsāt Hispānicas* 3 (2016): 79-92.

important figure in this portrait. Although not much is known about him with certainty, in the 1820s, he appears to have lived in Philadelphia, and led an active group of creole reformers who originated from Puerto Príncipe and other eastern jurisdictions.[96] Among these creoles was a young José Antonio Saco. Bernabé's views were apparently inherited by his son, Pedro. Although a large slaveholder, he was fervently opposed to the slave trade. In 1856, he became the unpaid British Vice Consul at Nuevitas and reported on local slaving to Consul Crawford in Havana. Given Britain's open and persistent criticism of the Spanish government's role in the traffic, Pedro's acceptance of this post was a very public statement both on his opposition to the slave trade and on the government's role in it. The Spanish government certainly did not consider him the most loyal of subjects. During the Cuban War for Independence (1868-1878), Spanish officials suspected him of siding with creole patriots and briefly threw him in prison.[97]

Although a tight connection between Sanchezes and anti-slave creole reformers is difficult to establish with certainty, a strong strain of creole-reformist sentiment clearly ran through other British spies in Cuba. In 1869, John V. Crawford, now the Consul General in Havana, made the point to the Foreign Office. Although the final slaving voyage had arrived on the island in 1866,

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[96] In their respective works, Geoffrey Scott Mitchell and Levi Marrero identify a Bernabé Sanchez from Puerto Príncipe as the leader of this group. I have found no Bernabé Sanchezes from this jurisdiction, except Emilio's father. The fact that Emilio's brother, Adolfo, lived in Philadelphia in the 1840s, is also suggestive. In fact, there may be much more to Emilio's father. In 1822, a Bernabé Sanchez from Havana wrote to President James Monroe requesting the US government annex the island. After a several-day discussion, the cabinet rejected the idea, mainly because they did not know anything about the writer. It may well have been Emilio's father; Emilio was born in Havana the following year, suggesting the family were living there at that time. On Sanchez in Philadelphia, see Geoffrey Scott Mitchell, "Blacks, the White Elite, and the Politics of Nation Building: Inter and Interracial Relationships" (Ph.D. diss., Tulane, 2006), 191; Levi Marrero, *Cuba: economía y sociedad: Azúcar, ilustración y conciencia*, *1763-1868*, vol. 15/7 (Río Piedras, P.R.: Editorial San Juan, 1972), 47-8, 354. On the Sanchez letter, see John Quincy Adams, *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, comprising portions of his diary from 1795 to 1848*, vol 6 (Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott & Co, 1875), 69-74. For more on this incident see Herminio Portell Vila, *Historia de Cuba en sus relaciones con los Estados Unidos y Espana*, vol. 1 (Havana: Jesus Montero, 1938), 210, 215-216, 223; José Luciano Franco, *Política continental americana de España en Cuba, 1812-1830* (2da. ed., Instituto de Historia, Academia de Ciencias de Cuba: La Habana, 1964), 302, footnote 539.

[97] Legajo 4356, No. 21, Ultramar, AHN.

rumors of slave landings were still circulating. The conscientious Crawford wrote to the Foreign Office to say he had sent out his "creole friends" to learn if the rumors were true. The informants, he added, "are all opposed to the [traffic] both for political reasons as well as from personal motives."[98]

Sanchez's motives appear, therefore, to have been quite mixed and distinctive from those of the British government. Although the Foreign Office and Sanchez shared a commitment to suppressing the traffic, they came to this position from very different angles. British suppression was rooted in ideology, markets, and world status. Its spy program was a natural extension of its existing campaign given the robust nature of the post-1850 trade and tools that were now at hand. Sanchez, by contrast, had immediate, firsthand concerns. He had debts to pay, both to his creditors and to his foes. He did not appear to have ethical problems with the trade. Yet, like the British government, he also thought in broad terms; specifically, about creole liberty in his native Cuba. His motives were therefore personal and distinctively creole, while his master's were distinctively British and governmental. These differences did not, however, prevent an alliance. The critical point was that both parties opposed slave traders and were willing to work diligently against them.

The Work of a Spy

Sanchez began his new career with zeal. Seven months into his contract, Archibald summarized his early labors to Lord Lyons, the British Minister in Washington. According to Archibald, Sanchez was sending a steady stream of intelligence. "I have, since March last," he said, "been in almost daily communication with my special informant."[99] Many of these missives were in cipher,

[98] John V. Crawford to Clarendon, Sept. 30, 1869, FO84/1303.
[99] Archibald to Lord Lyons, Oct. 4, 1859, FO84/1086. For a similar report, see Archibald to FO, July 11, 1859, FO84/1086.

and Archibald's clerks had been busy decoding them. The consulate had already sent thirty dispatches to London containing Sanchez's "voluminous" reports. Archibald had also sent slithers of his information to US officials in New York, but they apparently did nothing with them. In fact, their sensitivity to "foreign interposition," Archibald said, made his interventions "worse than useless" and he had given up. American inaction was particularly frustrating for Archibald because, as far as he could tell, Sanchez's information was remarkably full and accurate. As he explained to Lyons, his notes included "the names and descriptions with, in most cases, detailed information of the movements of no fewer than fifty vessels." All but a half dozen, he judged, were "beyond question engaged in the African Slave Trade."[100]

Sanchez had gathered this intelligence with little guidance from Archibald or the Foreign Office. The British government never attempted to shape his methods throughout his tenure as a spy. Other informants in Cuba, Spain, and Africa, were similarly left to their own devices. The Foreign Office may have adopted this approach because they did not feel equipped to offer advice. Each spy and local context were certainly very different, and informants, after all, were supposed to be the experts. They may also have wished to be in a position to distance themselves from the spies and their labor, or simply deemed it impossible to control their agents. In any case, Britain's approach was not to interfere, and as a result, spies had considerable autonomy over their work.

Sanchez used his independence to devise three main methods of intelligence gathering. The first was spying on slave traders. The physical geography of Manhattan and the tight clustering of its mercantile community aided him in this task. New York's merchants had always based themselves at Manhattan's tip since the arrival of the Dutch in the seventeenth century. It was a

[100] Archibald to Lord Lyons, Oct 4, 1859, FO84/1086. The Foreign Office supported Archibald's decision not to send more information to the Americans. Aug. 14, 1860, FO84/1086.

good location: the adjacent Hudson and the East Rivers were generously wide and deep, and the Bay and the Atlantic Ocean beyond were easily accessible.[101] By the mid-eighteenth century, these assets had helped the peninsula become one of the most important trade hubs in North America. Commercial growth was even more impressive during the next century. By 1850, New York was second only to London in terms of global trade. The Rivers were filled with vessels that traded the world over and wharfs lined the shorelines. On land, commercial growth and massive influxes of European migrants were putting Lower Manhattan under unprecedented pressure. With space at a premium, shops, offices, and counting houses were rising to several floors.

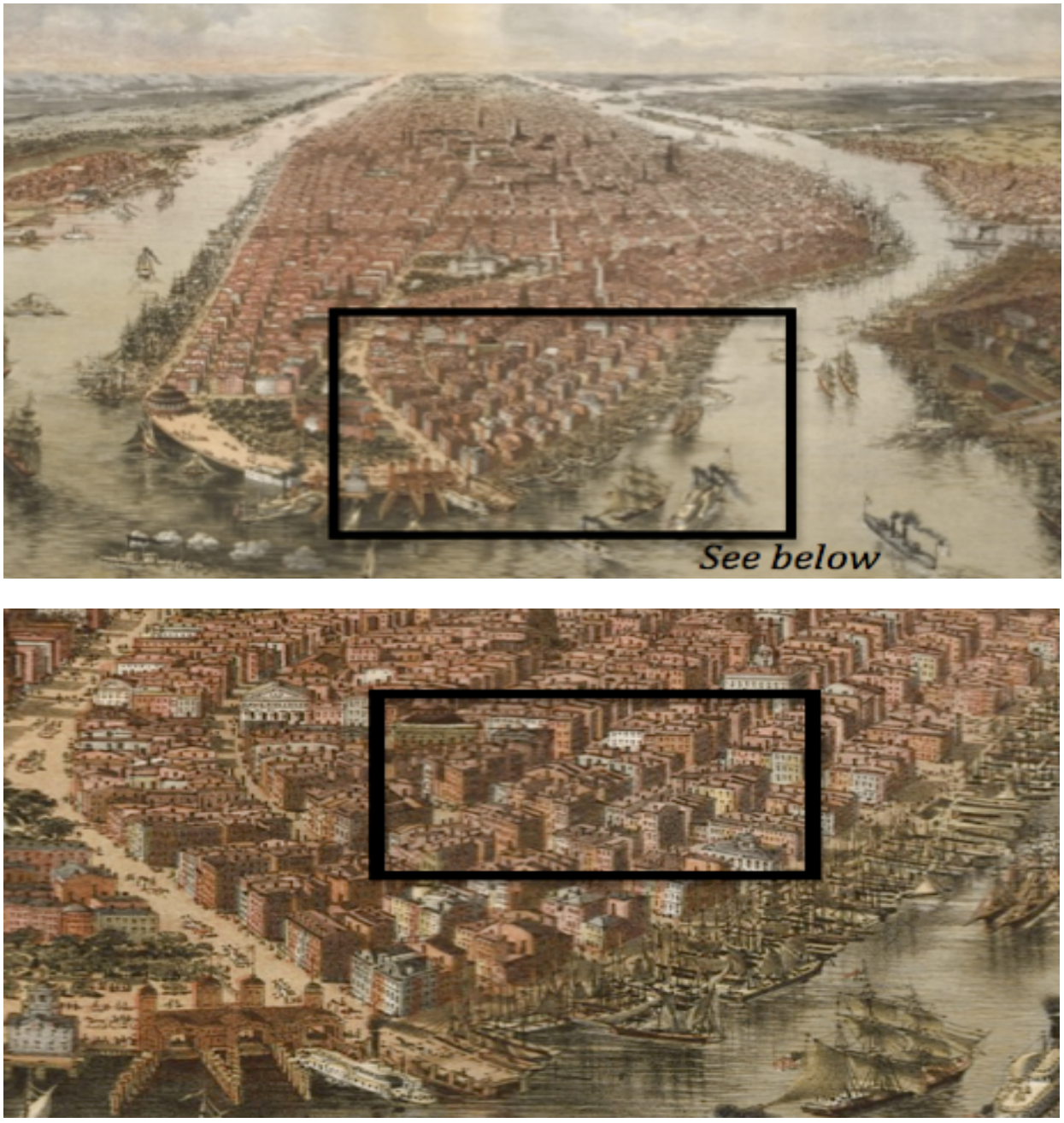
New York's slave traders were deeply embedded in this increasingly crowded peninsula. When the Lusophone immigrants arrived in the 1850s, many joined pre-existing Portuguese merchant firms specializing in foreign trade. Cunha Reis, for instance, became a partner in the Portuguese wine-importing firm Figanière and Company in 1856. The Angolan, José da Silva Maia Ferreira, joined the same firm, supposedly, as a clerk.[102] Using Figanière and Co. as a cover, Cunha Reis and Maia Ferreira were able to dispatch slave ships and launder capital relatively free from suspicion. Other traffickers had slightly different reasons for coming to Manhattan. Many of the ship suppliers, who were mainly Hispanics, had originally arrived as legal traders, and later began supplying slavers to Cuba. One of these merchants, José Mora, had arrived in New York in the early 1850s as an importer of Cuban sugar. By the end of the decade, he was still mainly engaged in this business, but sold vessel to traffickers in Cuba on the side.

Sanchez was also part of Lower Manhattan's merchant community and lived cheek by jowl with the slave traders. He conducted his ship-brokerage and commission business from an office

[101] For the development of New York, or New Amsterdam as it was then named, see Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 24-6, 43-6.
[102] See Marques, "The US," 279.

at 187 Pearl Street. As Figure 4.3 shows, the slave traders were all nearby. Many were within a few blocks or less. One of the Portuguese, João Machado, was only a few doors down at 165 Pearl. Another Portuguese, Inocêncio Abranches, was a little further along at 158 Pearl. Cunha Reis and

Figures 4.3. *The slave trading district of New York, c.1852-1863.*



Source: *From Bachmann,* 'Bird's Eye View of New York' *1865*

Maia Ferreira worked out of Figanière's office at 40 Beaver Street. José Mora was only 400 yards away at 54 Exchange Place. Juan Ceballos, the Spaniard who had betrayed Sanchez in the *Haidee* affair, was nearby at 23 Broadway. Sanchez's office was also close to the British consulate at 17 Broadway, just a few doors down from Ceballos. All the main players were therefore tightly clustered in a fairly small patch of land. The major pro and anti-slave trade agents in the US were literally coming face to face in Lower Manhattan.[103]

Sanchez watched his neighbors closely. Beginning with the *Haidee* offenders, he put the traffickers, in Archibald's words, "under surveillance."[104] Taking advantage of his role as a merchant and Manhattan's busy streets and wharfs, Sanchez followed them, keeping careful notes of their whereabouts. His job was harder when traffickers laid low, which was common immediately after voyages, when the US authorities were sometimes more alert. In 1859, Sanchez noted one of the *Haidee* investors, Antonio Almeida, was "concealed … for some time" after a recent voyage.[105] On other occasions, however, he saw the same Almeida "boldly about" the streets and docks.[106] Sometimes he monitored the offices of slaving trading firms. In the spring of 1859, he held a stakeout outside Almeida's wine importing firm, Abranches, Almeida and Company. As he wrote to Archibald, he spotted the steward of the *Haidee*, Jose Cayetano, coming out of Abranches' office, "on 1st April about 3 pm."[107]

Although surveillance helped Sanchez identify traffickers and their associations, he had to employ a second tactic – recruiting his own network of informants – to determine how they were

[103] For these addresses, see *New York City Directory* (New York: John Trow, 1859).
[104] Archibald to Malmesbury, Mar. 29, 1859 FO84/1086
[105] Sanchez to Archibald, Apr. 5, 1859, FO84/1086.
[106] Sanchez to Archibald, Apr. 30, 1859, FO84/1086
[107] Sanchez to Archibald, Apr. 30, 1859, FO84/1086.

operating.[108] The New York side of this network included dockworkers who helped prepare slavers for sea. Sanchez located these individuals through commercial contacts, such as a shipping master or sailor recruiter, named Javier.[109] When he found them, Sanchez engaged his sources in what he called "casual conversation."[110] It was a deceiving description. Sanchez was hard at work in these exchanges, subtly plumbing witnesses for information on the slave trade. Many let details slip. Two leaky vessels were a sailmaker, Jesse Braddick, and a shipping master named Keefe. In April 1859, both men revealed that Almeida held a stake in the voyage of the *Putnam* the previous year.[111] Another unwitting informant was Pierre L. Pierce, a ship chandler, who supplied vessels with stores, but also took ownership of slavers on behalf of Cunha Reis on the side.[112] In 1861, Pierce told Sanchez about the *Manuel Ortiz*, which had recently departed New York under the British flag. According to Pierce, the vessel was actually a slaver, and had only used British colors to "hoodwink" the US Marshal.[113]

Sanchez also drew information from New York investors and slave ship crews. Jonathon Dobson, who captained at least two slavers in the late 1850s, was one of his best sources.[114] On April 5, 1859, Sanchez reported: "Capt Dobson told me … the [slave ship] *Tyrant* was Cunha

[108] The Foreign Office frequently reminded Archibald that they needed ownership and departure information. See,, for instance, Foreign Office to Archibald, Apr. 15, 1859, FO84/1086. Also Russell's curt note on Wylde's Memo, Jan. 16, 1860, FO84/1082.
[109] Sanchez to Archibald, May 9, 1859, FO84/1086
[110] Sanchez to Archibald, July 27 & Aug. 2, 1859, FO84/1086.
[111] Sanchez's Memo on *Panchita*, Apr. 5, 1859, FO84/1086.
[112] For the role of Pierce in the case of *Star of the East*, see Archibald to Foreign Office, May 17, 1859.
[113] Sanchez to Archibald, Sept. 17, 1861, FO/84/1138. Sanchez also talked to Albert Horn, whom the US government hired to appraise slavers they had seized before they went to public auction. He was notorious for appraising the vessels below market rates, which allowed slave traders to reclaim them at minimal cost. Sanchez to Archibald Aug 9, 1859, FO84/1086.
[114] For instance, see Sanchez to Archibald, Apr. 5, 1859, FO84/1086 & Sanchez to Archibald Feb. 25, 1861, FO84/1138. Usually, Sanchez did not stipulate the information's source. For instance, in 1859, he wrote, "I have also been informed that the *Antelope* was purchased for a man by the name of Valencia", Sanchez to Archibald, Apr. 30, 1859, FO84/1086.

Reis's" despite being owned, ostensibly, by Matthew Lind.[115] In August 1859, the seasoned slave ship mate, John Macomber, told Sanchez that the recently departed *Brookline* was a slaver. Macomber knew this information, he said, because he had been offered the position of first mate, but refused it.[116] Sometimes Sanchez boldly played slave traders against each other. In December 1859, he approached J. Lima Vianna, one of the principal slaving merchants and voyage investors in New York. Sanchez told him that Dobson was about to denounce him to the local authorities for his involvement in the voyage of the *Isla de Cuba*, which caused Vianna to state that Dobson must have "gone crazy" for he had also "invested in the affair."[117]

Sanchez was not prepared to limit his work to New York. Drawing on familial and commercial ties, he expanded his information network to Cuba. His brother, Pedro, was one of two sources on the island. The British Vice Consul for Nuevitas and the neighboring jurisdiction of Gibara since 1856, Pedro had already been active in reporting the local trade to Consul Joseph Crawford in Havana.[118] In 1859, when his brother became a spy, Pedro also sent intelligence to him in New York. His main reason for helping Emilio was likely a sense of fraternal duty, although it is possible he was hoping for a cut of the bounties. In any case, unlike Emilio's informants in New York, he clearly knew what he was doing. Since Emilio rarely attributed specific information in his letters to Archibald, it is hard to say what Pedro wrote in his notes. In the spring of 1859, however, Archibald remarked that he was aware that Pedro had recently sent letters to his brother identifying "parties engaged in the traffic … and furnishing instructive details of some of their

[115] Sanchez's Memo on *Panchita*, Apr. 5, 1859, FO84/1086.
[116] Sanchez to Archibald, Aug. 2, 1859, FO84/1086.
[117] Sanchez's Memo on *Panchita*, Apr. 5, 1859, FO84/1086. The same source shows Sanchez was also gathering information from the Spanish slave ship captain Antonio Aragon.
[118] The British Consulate General in Havana was located at 1 San Pedro. *Directorio de artes, comercio e industrias de la Habana, 1859* (Habana, 1859), cuarta parte, 13.

transactions."[119] Much of this information probably related to the relatively small traffic slave trade near Nuevitas, but it is possible that Pedro exposed aspects of the wider trade in Cuba. Emilio's reports were certainly replete with reports of slave landings from all over the island.

Sanchez's other Cuban informant, José de Calzada, was likely the source of at least some of that intelligence. He was based in Havana, at the heart of the island's traffic. Like Pedro, he was a merchant operating in the US-Cuba market and sent his intelligence knowingly and willingly. His motives for helping Emilio are hard to assess. Unlike Pedro, he had no clear obligation to help Sanchez or attack the traffic. He likely knew Emilio through legal trade, but since Emilio did not leave business or personal papers it is hard to assess the strength of this connection. Money was probably one factor. In 1859, Sanchez told Archibald that he had recently used "money and influence" to get information from Havana.[120] He also stated, however, that Calzada sometimes volunteered intelligence.[121] Whatever his motives may have been, Calzada did not share Sanchez's apparent concern about 'Africanization.' In 1861, he petitioned Madrid for the right to carry 'free' African migrants from Fernando Po, Corisco, and Anabon to Cuba. This traffic was also pursued by slave traders such as Cunha Reis and almost replicated the horrors of the slave trade.[122] It was perhaps because Sanchez and Calzada did not agree on these matters that Sanchez retained a healthy degree of skepticism over his reports. In one note to Archibald, he said he had "faith" in Calzada's latest missive, but conceded "time alone will disclose the facts."[123]

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[119] Archibald to Sanchez, Mar. 8, 1859, FO84/1086.
[120] Sanchez to Archibald, May 9, 1859, FO84/1086. For Sanchez's costs, see also, Archibald to FO, July 11, FO84/1086.
[121] Sanchez to Archibald, May 13, 1859, FO84/1086.
[122] Gabriel Enriquez to Captain General, July 6, 1861, Reales Ordenes y Cédulas, leg. 222, no. 428, ANC. For the traffic from Brass River to Fernando Po, which was perhaps connected to this scheme, see enclosures in W.G. Romaine to Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mar. 14, 1863. Calzada also petitioned the Spanish government to introduce 3,000 Colombian Indians to Cuba. See Testimonio del expediente promovido por Dn José Calzada, Ultramar, leg. 91, no. 2, AHN.
[123] Sanchez to Archibald, May 13, 1859, FO84/1086.

Calzada was nevertheless well placed to help. His office was at 120 Obrapía street, in the middle of the city's merchant district and close to the docks (see Figure 4.4). Several important traffickers, including Julián Zulueta's father-in-law, Salvador Samá, were nearby.[124] Like Sanchez, Calzada was effective at engaging slave traders on the waterfront. In the summer of 1859, he spoke to a slaving captain named Ruiz, who was in command of the *Triton*. Ruiz told him, in Archibald's words, that he planned to sail to a US port, "purchase necessaries, and sail direct for the African coast."[125] Calzada was also effective at identifying the owners of slavers plying the US-Cuba nexus. In one instance, he wrote to Sanchez explaining that the *Tacony*, which had set sail from New York, was part owned by same Havana-based merchants that had been concerned in the voyage of the *Haidee*.[126]

Sanchez's third strategy – researching shipping information printed in newspapers, registers, and gazettes – also had local and international components.[127] Much of this data originated in the New York Custom House, where US law required ship-owners to clear their vessels before heading to sea. Typically, slave traders complied with this process, sending the false owners, such as Pierce, to clear the vessel on their behalf. Fortunately for Sanchez, New York City's Custom House passed this clearance information to major daily newspapers such as the *New York Herald* and *Journal of Commerce* via the Associated Press. Sanchez bought both these papers, knowing suspicious 'owners' and destinations would likely appear in their columns.[128]

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[124] *Directorio de artes, comercio e industrias de la Habana, 1859* (Habana, 1859), segunda parte, 26. Samá was also located at Obrapía, see *ibid*. Banco Español was located at 40 and 41 calle de Aguiar, which intersects with Obrapía, see tercera parte, 8.

[125] Quote from Archibald, Archibald to Foreign Office, Aug. 29, 1859, FO84/1086. Probably, Voyage #4918.

[126] Sanchez to Archibald, May 9, 1859, FO84/1086. Though Sanchez does not make it clear in his missives to Archibald, it is likely that many of the vessels that Sanchez noted were "purchased by parties at Havana" were probably first reported to him by Calzada.

[127] He listed them in Sanchez to Archibald, July 12, 1859, FO84/1086.

[128] Many intermediaries, such as H.S. Vining, who cleared and *Orion* and the *Emma Lincoln*, were repeat offenders.

Figure 4.4. *Plan of Havana, 1859.*

N.B. Calle Obrapía in Havana is marked in red. Obrapía leads to Havana harbor, on the left of the map.

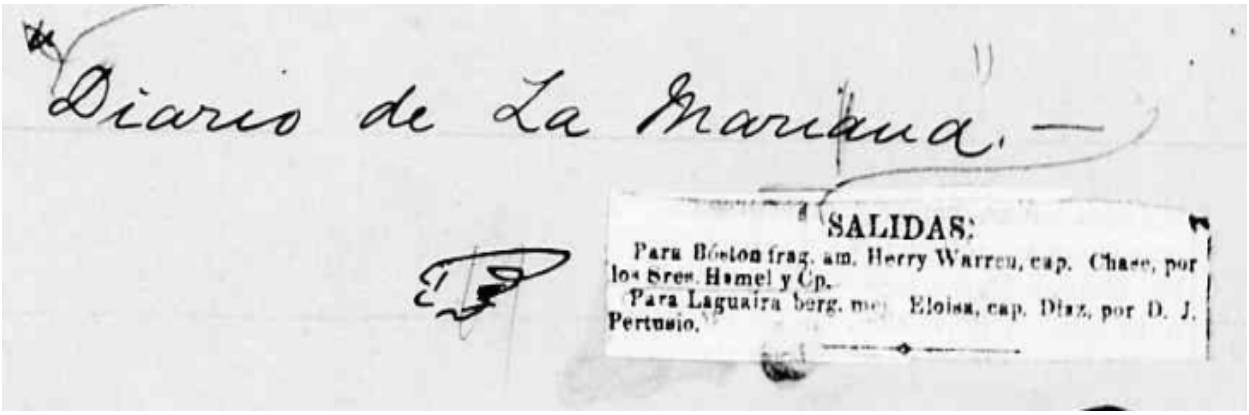
Source: *Havana, Cuba*, *from Plano de la ciudad de la Habana y estramuros para el directorio de 1859* (Librería de A. Granpera, Habana, 1859).

When he found them, he typically made a cutting and sent it to Archibald, along with comments on the true nature of the voyage. He also scoured the pages of *The American Lloyd's Register*, *Boston Ship Lists*, *The New Orleans Ship List*, and the *Shipping and Mercantile Gazette* (London), for descriptions of these vessels, and included them in his missives to Archibald. These details would help the WAS identify the vessels off the African coast.[129]

[129] For a full list of Sanchez's newspapers, see enclosure in Archibald to FO, July 11, 1859, FO84/1086.

Sanchez also used print sources to track slavers around the Atlantic basin. He subscribed to a wide variety of domestic and foreign newspapers, including *The Baltimore American*, *The Charleston Courier*, *The Havana Weekly Report* and *El Diario de la Marina* (also in Havana). As in New York, these papers contained clearance lists, meaning he could tell when suspected vessels left distant ports. As Figure 4.5 shows, he was able to use *El Diario de la Marina* to report the departure of the slaver *Eloisa* from Havana in July 1859. Foreign papers also helped Sanchez overcome slave traders' ploy of clearing vessels for false destinations.[130] If a suspicious vessel cleared from New York for an unlikely port, he could check a local paper's "arrivals" section to see whether it appeared. Sanchez was thus able to note in May 1859 that the barque *Antelope* had "cleared for St Juan de los Remedios," but there were "[n]o reports in the Cuban papers about her arrival."[131]

Figure 4.5. Sanchez's Newspaper Clipping from *El Diario de la Marina*.


Diario de La Marina.—

SALIDAS.

Para Bóston frag. am. Herry Warren, cap. Chase, por los Sres. Hamel y Cp.

Para Laguaira berg. mer. Eloisa, cap. Diaz, por D. J. Pertusio.

Source: Clipping enclosed in Sanchez to Archibald, July 19, 1859, FO84/1086

[130] Clearing for St. Thomas was especially popular, because captains could claim their papers meant São Tomé if they were intercepted off the African coast. See note in Tabular Statement, Archibald to FO, Oct. 10, 1859, FO84/1086

[131] ibid, Nov. 28, 1859.

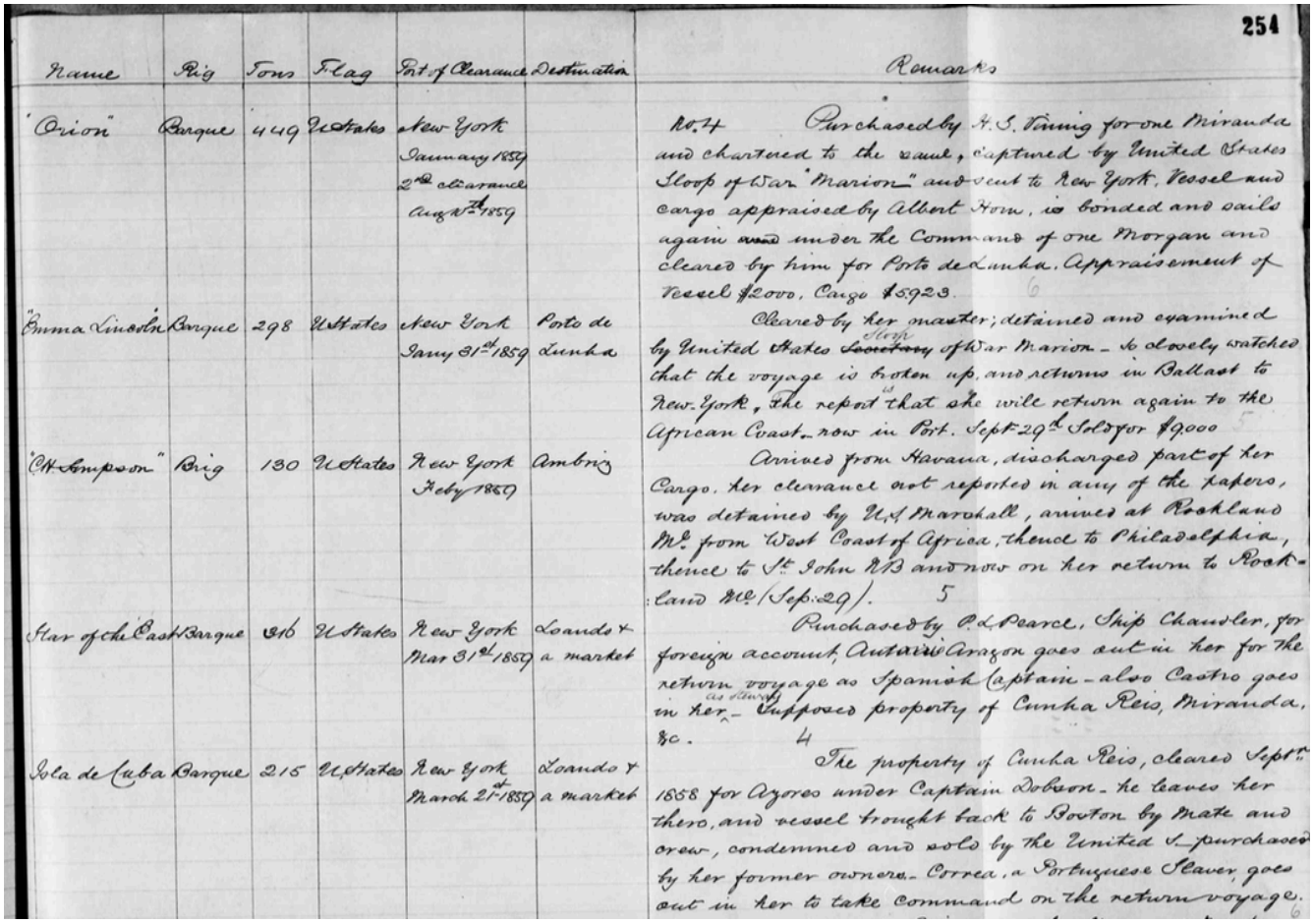
Despite Sanchez's adoption of these wide-ranging tactics, his access to the inner world of the slave trade was always limited, even in New York. He never got as close to the traffickers as Barreto, Alcoforado, or Rovirosa, his counterparts in other slaving regions. Although he talked with some leading investors such as Vianna, he had no direct contact with Almeida or Botelho, the principals in the *Haidee* affair. Indeed, that episode likely made it harder to strike up "casual conversation" with the most promising sources. Another problem was security. Even when he did talk with insiders, he was always wary of exposing himself. During one conversation with an unnamed informant, he learned Cunha Reis was involved in the voyage of the *Panchita*. Rather than press on, however, he dropped the topic, deciding he "could procure no further particulars without subjecting one's self to suspicion."[132] The New York Custom House could also be an unyielding source. Its clerks often failed to send full clearance information to the Associated Press, leaving the shipping lists without details on a vessel's owner, captain, or destination. When Sanchez attempted to access the originals at the Custom House, its staff refused to open the books.[133] In other instances, slaver traders bypassed the Custom House completely and sailed straight out to sea. These moonlight departures left Sanchez scrambling.

Sanchez's disclosures were nevertheless impressive. In total, he gave information on 171 of all 223 voyages that took place throughout the Atlantic basin between 1859 and 1862.[134] In other words, he reported 77 percent, or about three in four, of all voyages during his tenure. As these figures suggest, his intelligence was not just strong in New York, or even the US, but also in Cuba. On occasion, he learned snippets about the trade from Europe, where he also had ties through

[132] Sanchez to Archibald, Apr. 30, 1859, FO84/1086.
[133] Sanchez to Archibald, May 9, 1859, FO84/1086.
[134] Note on calculation: 'Voyages' estimates that 216 total voyages took place 1859-1862. Accepting *Voyages*' estimation that they have accounted for 97 percent of all voyages to the Spanish Americas during this period, we can project that 223 voyages took place 1859-1862. Source: 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/BVnRRbrF.

trade and family. His information from these regions was often superior to that offered by local British spies. William Wylde underscored the point when Joseph Crawford requested permission to hire a spy in Havana in 1860. Wylde responded by saying he "did not think that th[e] proposal could be sanctioned, because we now receive from New York information of the movements of slave vessels in Cuba, and if we employed another person in that island, we should very likely have to pay twice for the same information." In terms of slave trade shipping, in other words, Sanchez's knowledge was unmatched. Figure 4.6, an abbreviated list of slavers that the New York consulate made from his notes, shows the completeness of his intelligence.

Figure 4.6. *Sanchez's Abbreviated List of Slavers*



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Name	Rig	Tons	Flag	Port of Clearance	Destination	Remarks
"Orion"	Barque	449	U. States	New York January 1859 2nd clearance Aug 2nd 1859		No 4 Purchased by H. S. Fanning for one Miranda and chartered to the same, captured by United States Sloop of War "Marion" and sent to New York. Vessel and cargo appraised by Albert Horn, is bonded and sails again ~~was~~ under the Command of one Morgan and cleared by him for Porto de Cunha. Appraisement of Vessel $2000, Cargo $5923. 6
"Emma Lincoln"	Barque	298	U. States	New York Jany 31st 1859	Porto de Cunha	Cleared by her master; detained and examined by United States ~~Sanitary~~ Sloop of War Marion - so closely watched that the voyage is broken up, and returns in Ballast to New York, the report that she will return again to the African Coast - now in Port. Sept 29th Sold for $9,000
"C. H. Simpson"	Brig	130	U. States	New York Feby 1859	Ambriz	Arrived from Havana, discharged part of her Cargo, her clearance not reported in any of the papers, was detained by U.S. Marshall, arrived at Rockland Me. from West Coast of Africa, thence to Philadelphia, thence to St. John NB and now on her return to Rockland Me. (Sep. 29). 5
Star of the East	Barque	316	U. States	New York Mar 31st 1859	Loando & a market	Purchased by P. L. Pearce, Ship Chandler, for foreign account, Antairis Arazon goes out in her for the return voyage as Spanish Captain - also Castro goes in her as Steward - Supposed property of Cunha Reis, Miranda, &c. 4
Isla de Cuba	Barque	215	U. States	New York March 21st 1859	Loando & a market	The property of Cunha Reis, cleared Sept 1858 for Azores under Captain Dobson - he leaves her there, and vessel brought back to Boston by Mate and crew, condemned and sold by the United S. purchased by her former owners - Correa, a Portuguese Slaver goes out in her to take Command on the return voyage. 6

Source: Archibald to Foreign Office, Oct. 10, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA

Sanchez worked hard throughout his tenure, but there were variations in his output. Between 1859 and 1862, he sent at least 178 letters to Archibald. As Figure 4.7 indicates, these letters did not come in a steady stream. In the early period of his tenure, Sanchez wrote prolifically. In the summer of 1859, for example, he sent a letter every two or three days. Reflecting this effort, Archibald informed the Foreign Office that Sanchez's "whole time is now in this business." Presumably his commission and ship-brokerage business dropped off dramatically during this period, although it is hard to be certain without analyzing his business papers. In contrast to Sanchez's earlier efforts, his efforts appear to have tailed off later in his tenure. In 1861 and 1862 he wrote about once per week, with the length and detail of his missives remaining steady at around 2-3 pages. At first glance, this pattern suggests a shrinking commitment to the task. However, it was more a reflection of the diminishing intensity of the trade. Simply put, Sanchez had less to report. Figure 4.8 charts Sanchez's letter-writing and slave ship departures during his tenure. The rough correlation suggests Sanchez's steady commitment to the task of spying.

Emilio Sanchez ran a wide-ranging and committed intelligence campaign against the slave trade between 1859 and 1862. His headquarters were in New York, but he pressed far beyond it. He benefitted from his own location in Manhattan, his occupation as a merchant, and his familial and commercial ties with Cuba. He worked hard to press home these advantages. Indeed, he gambled on his ability to do so by neglecting his business, paying informants out of pocket, and risking his own safety. The Foreign Office had left it up to Sanchez to make his mark as a spy and he had grasped it with both hands. He failed to penetrate every corner of slave trade shipping in the Americas, but he probably knew more about it than anyone else, bar the traffickers themselves.

Figure 4.7. *Monthly Stream of Sanchez's 178 Letters from New York to London, 1859-62*

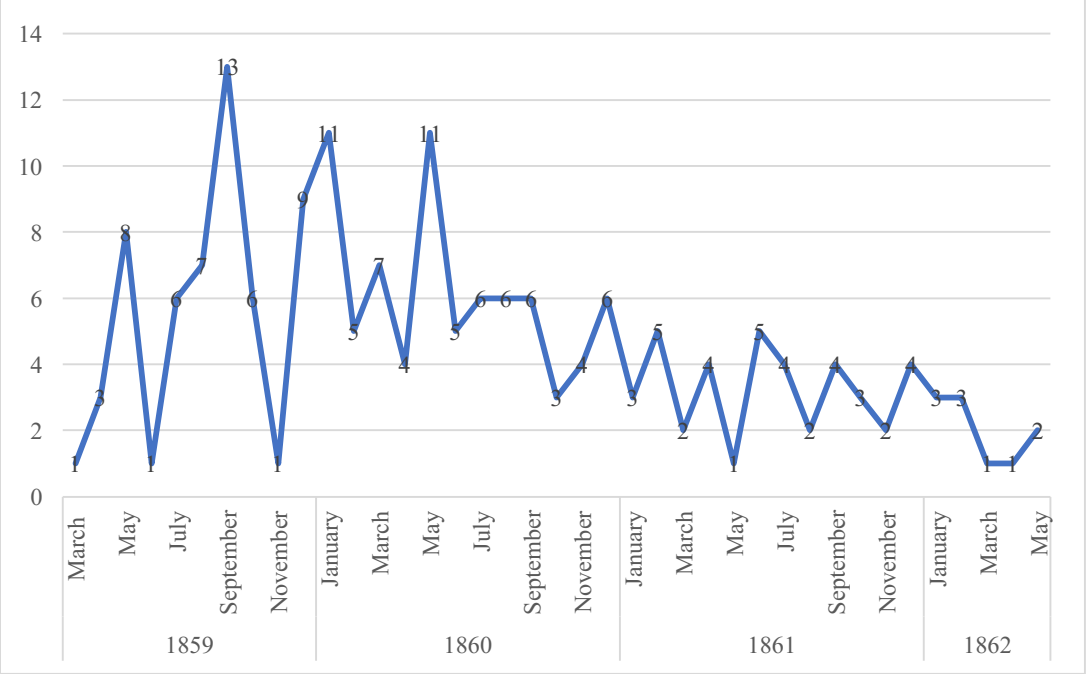
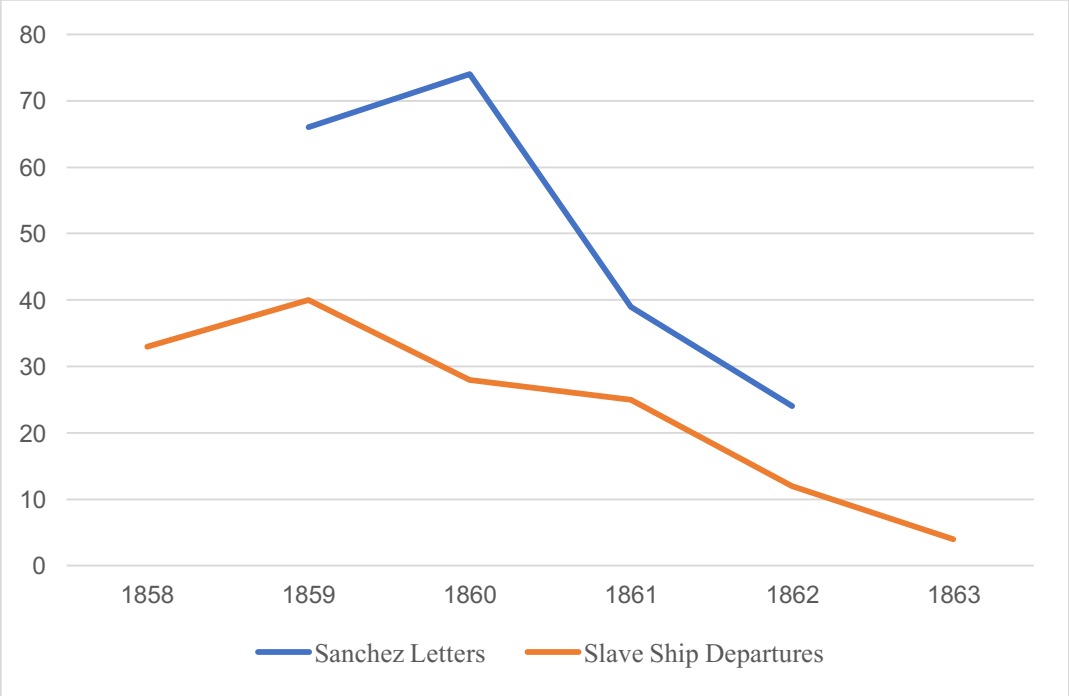


Figure 4.8. *Sanchez's letters and slave ship departures from US, Cuba, and Iberia*



The Value of Intelligence

With little help from American officials in New York, the British government had to send Sanchez's intelligence pulsing around the Atlantic basin before they could put it to use. The main flow followed a vast arc running from New York to London and from London to British cruisers off the African coast.[135] Slave traders, however, were running international networks of their own. Like Sanchez's notes, the great majority of their vessels began their journeys in the Americas and ended up in African waters. As a result, the slave trade and suppression networks broadly mirrored and competed with each other. The following section begins by examining that competition through the voyage and interception of the *Pamphylia* in 1859 (see Tables 4.1 & 4.2).[136]

Tables 4.1 & 4.2. *The Competing Networks of the* Pamphylia.

The Slave Trading Network

Pamphylia departs New York	August 1859
Pamphylia departs Havana	Sept. 23, 1859
Pamphylia arrives in West Central Africa	Dec. 1859 (circa 10 week passage*)
Pamphylia captured Jan. 9, 1860	

[135] This circuit was thick with data. In 1858, before the Foreign Office hired Sanchez, Archibald had sent only seven dispatches to London marked "Slave Trade". In 1859 and 1860, he sent 43 "Slave Trade" dispatches, all containing Sanchez's copious notes. In fact, in 1860, Archibald sent almost as many "Slave Trade" dispatches to London as "Regular" ones, about commerce, migration, and other business (43 "Slave Trade" dispatches vs. to 49 "Regular" dispatches). See, Archibald to FO, December 31, 1860, FO5/697; Archibald to FO, December 31, 1860, FO5/697.

[136] "Voyages" #4809. For further examples of the flow of intelligence around Britain's anti-slavery network, see FO84/1096, for FO-Admiralty correspondence in 1859 and ADM 123/176 for Admiralty-Africa Squadron correspondence.

* Records do not show when the *Pamphylia* arrived on the coast. Without stops, Cuba-Africa voyages averaged eight to ten weeks in 1859. *'Voyages'*.

The Suppression Network

Sanchez passes intelligence to Archibald	Sept. 29, 1859
Slave Trade 31 departs New York	Oct. 10, 1859
ST 31 arrives at the Foreign Office	Oct. 25, 1859 (2 week passage)
ST 31 arrives at the Admiralty	Nov. 4, 1859
ST 31 leaves Liverpool	Nov. 24, 1859
ST 31 arrives Fernando Po	Dec. 30, 1859 (5 week passage)
Pamphylia captured Jan. 9, 1860	

Like many midcentury slave ships, the *Pamphylia* entered the traffic through the sugar nexus linking New York and Havana. Built in Brewer, Maine, in 1851, the vessel was a barque, like the slaver *Orion*, depicted in Figure 4.9.[137] For many years, the *Pamphylia* was owned by a Boston merchant named Sewell, who had no apparent connection with the slave trade.[138] In 1858, it was purchased by Mora Bros. and Navarro, a Cuban sugar-importing firm with offices in New York and Havana.[139] Initially, Mora Bros. operated the barque in the sugar trade with Cuba.[140] In June 1859 it sailed to Havana, and in July, it was back in New York undergoing repairs.[141] In August it was in Havana again. On this occasion, however, it was chartered by the notorious Cuban slave-trading firm Ximenes, Martinez, and Lafitte. These parties put a new Spanish and Cuban

[137] New-York Marine Register 1857, 105
[138] New-York Marine Register 1857, 105
[139] New-York Marine Register 1858, 113
[140] See voyages to Nuevitas recorded in *Boston Courier*, Apr. 18, May 26, 1859.
[141] It was being metalled. See, *American Lloyd's Register of American and Foreign Shipping 1861*, 196.

crew aboard the vessel, and on September 21, they cleared it for Omoa, Honduras, under the American flag.[142]

Figure 4.9. *Capture of the Orion*

The *Pamphylia* was a barque, similar to the *Orion* (left), here being intercepted by a British cruiser. Both vessels were captured on information supplied by Sanchez.

Source: *The Illustrated London News*, Apr. 28, 1860.

Sanchez had been keeping an eye on the *Pamphylia* since the early summer. He first reported on the ship during its visit to Havana in June. At that point, he noted it had been sold to

[142] Sanchez to Archibald, Oct. 21, 1859, FO84/1086; US Consul John Appleton to Assistant Secretary of State, October 6, 1859, *House Executive Documents*, 36th Congress (Washington D.C., 1861), 373-4.

Cuban traffickers and would eventually sail for the African coast. He also gave its description from *American Lloyd's Register*.[143] He did not mention the vessel again until it had been repaired in New York in July and had returned to Havana. On September 29, a week after the *Pamphylia* cleared Havana, he confirmed to Archibald that the vessel was a slaver.[144] In a series of October missives, he reported it had set sail for the African coast. He also confirmed that the barque was "ostensibly under charter" but had actually been sold in Havana for $9,500.[145] In other words, he was sure the *Pamphylia* was no longer a bona-fide American vessel. It was exactly the information the WAS required.

With the vital information confirmed, Archibald prepared Sanchez's intelligence for its long journey around the Atlantic basin. Typically, his dispatches contained copies of Sanchez's notes, accompanied by a cover letter. It was six months into Sanchez's contract, however, and Archibald wanted to take stock of the work so far. He instructed a clerk to draw up a comprehensive list of all the slavers Sanchez had already reported. When news of the *Pamphylia* arrived, the clerk added it to the list, along with details on its sale in Havana, its departure, flag, rigging, and tonnage. On October 10, the list was ready. Archibald wrote a cover letter introducing it and enclosed a few of Sanchez's latest missives. He then bundled all the documents and labeled them Slave Trade No. 31. It was the thirty-first "Slave Trade" dispatch of the year. He then sent Slave Trade 31 to New York harbor, where the mail steamer, *Asia*, was about to depart for England.[146]

After a two-week passage across the North Atlantic aboard the *Asia*, Slave Trade 31 began the European leg of its journey. On October 25, it arrived at the Foreign Office in Downing Street,

[143] For details of this report, see Sanchez to Archibald, Sept. 29, 1859, FO84/1086, and the list of slavers in Archibald to FO, Oct. 10, 1859, FO84/1086.
[144] Sanchez to Archibald, Sept. 29, 1859, FO84/1086.
[145] See list of slavers in Archibald to FO, Oct. 10, 1859 & Sanchez to Archibald, Oct. 21, 1859, FO84/1086.
[146] See notes on cover of Archibald to FO, Oct. 10, 1859, FO84/1086.

London.[147] Archibald had addressed Slave Trade 31 to the Foreign Secretary, Lord Russell, but it was common practice for the relevant head clerks and undersecretaries, in this case, Wylde and Hammond, to read dispatches.[148] Recognizing the value of Sanchez's information, these senior figures had a junior clerk make a copy of the dispatch and send it to the Admiralty, a few streets away at Whitehall, on the north bank of the Thames.[149] On November 4, William Romaine, the Second Secretary of the Admiralty, reviewed Sanchez's list and decided it should go to the WAS. Composing a cover letter addressed to Frederick Grey, the Commander of the WAS, Romaine explained it contained "information respecting vessels which have from time to time been denounced by Her Majesty's Consul at New York."[150] Then, the Admiralty sent the list aboard a train to Liverpool, 250 miles northwest of London. When it arrived, it was transferred to a mail steamer, *Cleopatra*, which was due to leave for West Africa. It departed Liverpool on November 24.[151]

The *Cleopatra* brought Sanchez's information into the African phase of its journey. On December 30, five weeks after leaving Liverpool, the steamer arrived at its final destination, the Spanish colony of Fernando Po. Like many islands off mainland Africa, Fernando Po was an important waystation for passing vessels and during the mid-nineteenth century, British and American cruisers stopped there for coals and provisions. They also came to receive mail from home. Thanks to the scheduling certainty introduced by steam, they could expect the mail on

[147] Jones, *The Administration of the Nineteenth-Century Foreign Office*, 11.
[148] See Jones, *The Administration of the Nineteenth-Century Foreign Office*, 20-1, 149-150.
[149] See notes on cover of Archibald to FO, Oct. 10, 1859, FO84/1096. On the mechanical role of junior clerks, see Otte, *The Permanent Under-Secretary,* 8. See also, Jones, *The Administration of the Nineteenth-Century Foreign Office*, 22-40.
[150] Romaine to Grey, Nov. 4, 1859, ADM123/179.
[151] *The Economist*, Feb. 18, 1860.

specific days each month.[152] Typically, one cruiser from each squadron collected the mail and headed south to their respective bases in Luanda.[153] In the case of the December 1860 mail, the name of the British runner is unclear, but the American warship, USS *Sumpter*, can be used as a proxy.[154] This vessel picked up the mail in Fernando Po on December 30 and spent the next week journeying to Luanda. As the *Sumpter* headed south towards the coast of West Central Africa, its crew passed dispatches and news to their counterparts aboard passing American cruisers. It must have been during the British version of these exchanges that Sanchez's list arrived in the hands of British officers and word of the *Pamphylia* spread among the fleet.[155]

Sanchez's intelligence had arrived with the WAS just in time. On January 9, Lieutenant Burton, captain of HMS *Triton*, spotted a barque matching the *Pamphylia*'s description standing off Landano about 30 miles north of the Congo River.[156] It was not showing colors. Burton order his crew to fire a blank, and the strange vessel raised the US flag to deter British intervention. Yet Burton was armed with Sanchez's information, and he approached the barque with confidence. Realizing they were about to be captured, the *Pamphylia*'s 30-strong crew hauled down the American flag, tossed the vessel's papers overboard, and surrendered. When Burton and his men arrived, they clambered aboard and arraigned the crew. Dealing with the crew was legally complicated, however, because they had initially claimed US protection. Neither Burton nor the Admiralty wanted to deal with potential American objections to the capture. Burton and his men

[152] US mails also came via Liverpool. See, C. Herbert Gilliland, *USS Constellation on the Dismal Coast: Willie Leonard's Journal, 1859-1861* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2013), 40.
[153] For more on this system, see Donald Canney, *Africa Squadron*, 214; Gilliland, *USS Constellation on the Dismal Coast*, 30, 40.
[154] For USS *Sumpter* at Fernando Po see, *London Times*, March 13, 1860. For more on the *Sumpter* and its stops at Fernando Po, see, George E. Belknap ed., *Letters of Capt. Geo. Hamilton Perkins, U. S. N*. (Ira C. Evans: Concord NH, 1886), 222-3.
[155] For arrival of *Sumpter* in Luanda on January 5, see Log of HMS Pluto, ADM53/6499, TNA.
[156] Burton had been communicating frequently with other British cruisers during early January. See Log of HMS Triton, ADM53/6621, TNA.

would also have known their bounties on the capture were secure, regardless of whether they took the traffickers into custody.[157] Under these influences, they decided to simply dump the crew ashore at Cabinda, near the mouth of the Congo River.

When Burton and his men had boarded the *Pamphylia*, they also discovered 600 sickly captives beneath the deck.[158] Burton decided to bring 200 of the Africans aboard the *Triton* and to leave the remainder aboard the *Pamphylia*. The two vessels then journeyed to the island of St. Helena, where a British Vice Admiralty Court held jurisdiction over flagless vessels. On February 13, 1860, the Court condemned the barque, broke it up, and sold it to the highest bidder. The Africans, meanwhile, spent several months at cramped barracks in Rupert's Valley.[159] In accordance with Britain's policy on 'recaptives,' in the spring of 1860, ships originating in Asia took the surviving *Pamphylia* Africans to Demerara, Trinidad, and other parts of the British Caribbean to serve apprenticeships.[160]

Sanchez's information was decisive in this instance, but was this a typical case? One way to assess his overall effectiveness is to analyze his pay. The Foreign Office had agreed to reward Sanchez for vessels captured on his information and guaranteed him £400, annually, even if they captured none. Although the large number of slavers operating between 1859-1862 made this formula potentially lucrative, Sanchez did not do especially well from it. Despite laboring earnestly

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[157] For payout for the *Pamphylia* capture, which totaled £2930, see High Court of Admiralty, and Supreme Court of Judicature, High Court of Justice, Probate, Divorce and Admiralty Division: Admiralty Miscellanea; Naval prize account register, vol 1, 1855-1862, no. 16, in HCA30/988, TNA.

[158] Lt. Burton to Admiralty, Jan. 9, 1860, in *Correspondence*, 149.

[159] Judge Wilde to Lord Russell, Feb. 28, 1860, FO84/121. For St. Helena's place in the slave trade suppression, see Andrew Pearson, *Distant Freedom: St Helena and the Abolition of the Slave Trade, 1840-1872* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016)

[160] E.H. Drummond Hay to Duke of Newcastle, Feb. 29, 1860, CO247/93. I am indebted to Andrew Pearson for sharing this source. For more on the flow of 'recaptives' especially to Trinidad and the Bahamas, see Rosanne Marion Adderley, *"New Negroes from Africa": Slave Trade Abolition and Free African Settlement in the Nineteenth Century Caribbean* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006).

throughout his career and reporting on the vast majority of slavers, the Foreign Office never paid him more than his guaranteed annual salary. His total pay over the course of his 3-year 4-month tenure was £1,400; a sum that included the annual £400 payments, plus £100 retrospectively awarded in 1863. In fact, the Foreign Office only accepted that his information had been instrumental in the capture of 4 vessels: *Ardennes*, *Orion*, *Stephen H Townsend*, and *Lillie Mills*. Taking these payouts at face value, Sanchez's information appears either to have been of little use, or handled inefficiently by Britain's suppression network.[161]

Sanchez's poor returns seem to have stemmed, however, from Foreign Office parsimony. From the beginning of his tenure, the Foreign Office was committed to squeezing the most information out of him for the least amount of money. Its first pitch in 1859 included a £100 annual minimum, which Sanchez immediately protested as too low. He also decried its terms on captures as "couched in vague language."[162] Initially, senior figures at the Foreign Office were unsympathetic. Lord Wodehouse, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary, noted in an internal memo: "very possibly if [Sanchez] finds we won't bid higher, he will accept our terms." Lord Russell, who had the final word on the matter, simply instructed Archibald to "refuse more."[163] Sanchez did manage to secure the £400 rate, but only after Wylde pointed out to Russell "the considerable risks" his job entailed.[164]

The Foreign Office's good faith on captures was put to the test when positive news arrived from the African coast. A year into Sanchez's service, Commodore William Edmonstone, reported

[161] The Foreign Office renewed Sanchez's contract annually in the spring. For a final three-month renewal in 1862, see Wylde Memo, Feb 20, 1862, FO84/1172. The Foreign Office paid £100 on the capture of the *Stephen H Townsend* and *Lillie Mills* retrospectively, in 1863. For the payments on the four vessels, see FO to Archibald, Aug. 5, 1859, FO84/1086 and Admiralty Letter, May 14, 1863, FO84/1208.
[162] Sanchez to Archibald, July 12, 1859, FO84/1086.
[163] Wodehouse Memo, July 26, 1859, FO84/1082.
[164] Wylde Memo, Aug. 2, 1859, FO84/1082.

glowingly about his intelligence. Summarizing Edmonstone's report for Wodehouse and Russell, Wylde noted that a single cruiser, HMS *Archer*, had captured the "Stephen H Townsend, Laura, Lillie Mills and Eloisa in consequence of information received from the Foreign Office."[165] Edmonstone had also said British cruisers had intercepted the *Orion*, the *Tavernier*, and *Pamphylia* on Sanchez's intelligence.[166] In addition, he mentioned that British officers were passing information directly to American officers, and that "several other vessels" had been detained as result.[167] Although Edmonstone did not say exactly how many vessels had been captured on Sanchez's intelligence, he clearly regarded it as valuable. According to Wylde, Edmonstone was "decidedly of the opinion that the information has been frequently the cause of vessels being captured which perhaps otherwise would not have been boarded."[168] Edmonstone's successor, Commodore Frederick Grey, agreed. In 1860, he told the Foreign Office, "I have no doubt that the traffic has been considerable impeded [through Sanchez's information] & that a great advantage has resulted from it."[169]

Despite these favorable reports, the Foreign Office failed to pay Sanchez what they owed him. Edmonstone named seven vessels that had been captured on Sanchez's intelligence in his 1860 report, but the Foreign Office wrote to Archibald only acknowledging three. It was not that

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[165] Edmonstone note, June 18, 1860, enclosed in Wylde Memo, Feb. 1, 1861, FO84/1138.
[166] *Ibid*; British officers had presented the *Orion* to the US cruiser, USS *Marion*. R. H. Burton to Secretary of the Admiralty, Apr. 24, 1859, in *Correspondence with the British Commissioners* (Harrison and Sons: London, 1860), 104.
[167] Edmonstone, June 18, 1860 in Wylde Memo, Feb. 1, 1861, FO84/1138.
[168] Edmonstone, June 18, 1860 in Wylde Memo, Feb. 1, 1861, FO84/1138.
[169] Grey to Secretary of Admiralty, May 18, 1860, enclosed in Romaine to Wodehouse, June 28, 1860, FO84/1123. Edmonstone's predecessor, Commodore Wise, made similar remarks. During his command, Wise had sent a memo to British vessels instructing them to pass Sanchez's lists to US cruisers. See Wise Memo, Fall 1859, FO84/1100. In October 1862, at the end of Sanchez's tenure, Edmonstone reported that 88 vessels had been engaged in the slave trade on the African coast between during the previous twelve months. Of those vessels, he said "no less than 68 vessels are actually mentioned on the suspected list which I have from time to time received from the Secretary of the Admiralty." Edmonstone to Rear Admiral Sir Baldwin W. Walker, Oct. 22, 1862, FO84/1207.

senior figures at the Foreign Office disputed the accuracy of Edmonstone's report, but rather they did not consider it necessary to pass this information to Sanchez. Although Wylde wrote to Wodehouse and Russell in 1862 acknowledging that Sanchez's intelligence had "led to a considerable number of captures being made by our own cruisers and Americans also," the Foreign Office only informed Sanchez that one other slaver, the *Ardennes*, had been captured through his intelligence.[170] As a result, his pay never rose above the guaranteed £400 each year. The Foreign Office seemed to consider that sum a maximum, as well as a minimum.

The Foreign Office's unscrupulous approach to Sanchez's pay was probably guided by financial constraints. The Foreign Office was paying Sanchez and its other informants from a shrinking Secret Service budget. During Sanchez's tenure, Parliament approved the SSF at £25,000 annually. This sum was down from over £50,000 earlier in the century.[171] The reduced allowance coincided with the expansion of British influence in the world and the Foreign Office's increasing use of undercover agents, especially in the slave trade. Making the budgetary situation worse, the Foreign Office paid many of its spies and their families substantial allowances from the SSF, even after they had retired.[172] The Foreign Office was wary of dispensing with the pensions. When Under-Secretary Hammond expressed his alarm at the state of the SSF in May 1858, Malmesbury, the Foreign Secretary, replied instructing him not to trim the pensions. He may have been concerned unpaid pensioners would turn against their former masters. In the same note, he remarked that his major concern was "the unveiling [of] the Secret Service system to the public."[173]

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[170] Wylde Memo, Feb. 20, 1862, FO84/1172.
[171] See Hammond's Memo expressing his alarm at the shrinking budget, HD3/142, TNA.
[172] See "Pensions and allowances paid out of Secret Service Fund" June 29, 1859, HD3/27 & HD3/31. For further budgetary pressure on the Foreign Office from the Treasury between 1853 and 58, during Clarendon's reign, see Jones, *The Nineteenth-Century Foreign Office*, 22-40.
[173] Hammond Memo, May 1858, HD3/142. The Foreign Office also treated Rovirosa firmly on his pay. In 1864, it offered him £200 for solid information he valued at £1000. WHW to Russell, Aug 15, 1864, WYL/27/26-28, DUA.

Although the Foreign Office's approach to Sanchez's pay makes an assessment of his effectiveness difficult, it is possible to give rough estimates of the number of ships and captives intercepted on his intelligence. These estimates can be reached by extending Edmonstone's one-year assessment over the entire length of Sanchez's career and adjusting for his slightly diminishing reportage over time. That calculation produces a total of 30 slavers captured on his information between 1859 and 1862.[174] This figure is about a third of the total number of British and US captures off the African coast during these years.[175] In broader terms, it also represents 13 percent of all 223 slavers that set sail between 1859 and 1862. To estimate how many captives traffickers would have been forced across the Atlantic basin on these ships, the 30 slavers can be multiplied by 696, the average number of captives carried aboard slavers between 1859 and 1862.[176] That calculation produces a figure of 20,880. This number represents almost a quarter of the total number of captives who boarded slavers during these years.[177] Although it is difficult to calculate the extra risk that Sanchez's information created for slave traders, his intelligence presumably reduced their willingness to send more vessels, and thus prevented even more Africans from entering the traffic. Therefore, although Sanchez's information failed to end the trade, it made a real contribution to naval suppression and to the lives of thousands of Africans.

It was not that the Foreign Office lost faith in spying; each year, Wodehouse and Russell, renewed Sanchez contract with ringing endorsements. Instead, they were simply calculating, as Russell had put it in 1859, that Sanchez "won't bid higher." Wylde Memo, Mar. 21, 1860, FO84/1111; Wylde Memo, Feb. 1, 1861, FO84/1138.

[174] Edmonstone had reported eight vessels, but mentioned that US cruisers had captured "several other vessels" on Sanchez's information. Taking a conservative total annual figure of 10 and multiplying it by 3.25 (Sanchez's tenure was 3 years and 4 months), we arrive at a total of 33 slavers. When Sanchez's slightly diminishing reportage, is taken into account, the figure becomes 30.

[175] Britain and the US captured 87 vessels off the African coast during Sanchez's tenure: 63 and 24 respectively. For British captures, see Memo on captured slavers in FO to Archibald, Mar. 29, 1860, FO84/1111 (showing 18 captures in 1859), and Christopher Lloyd, *The Navy and the Slave Trade*, App. A, 276 (showing 45 captures from 1860 to 1862). For US captures, see Canney, *Africa Squadron*, 234. The US authorities captured a total of 42 American vessels throughout the Atlantic basin during this period (including in US ports and the Gulf of Mexico). See Howard, *American Slavers*, 219-223.

[176] http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/8NEAtMP9

[177] http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/aZ9yQ6yj

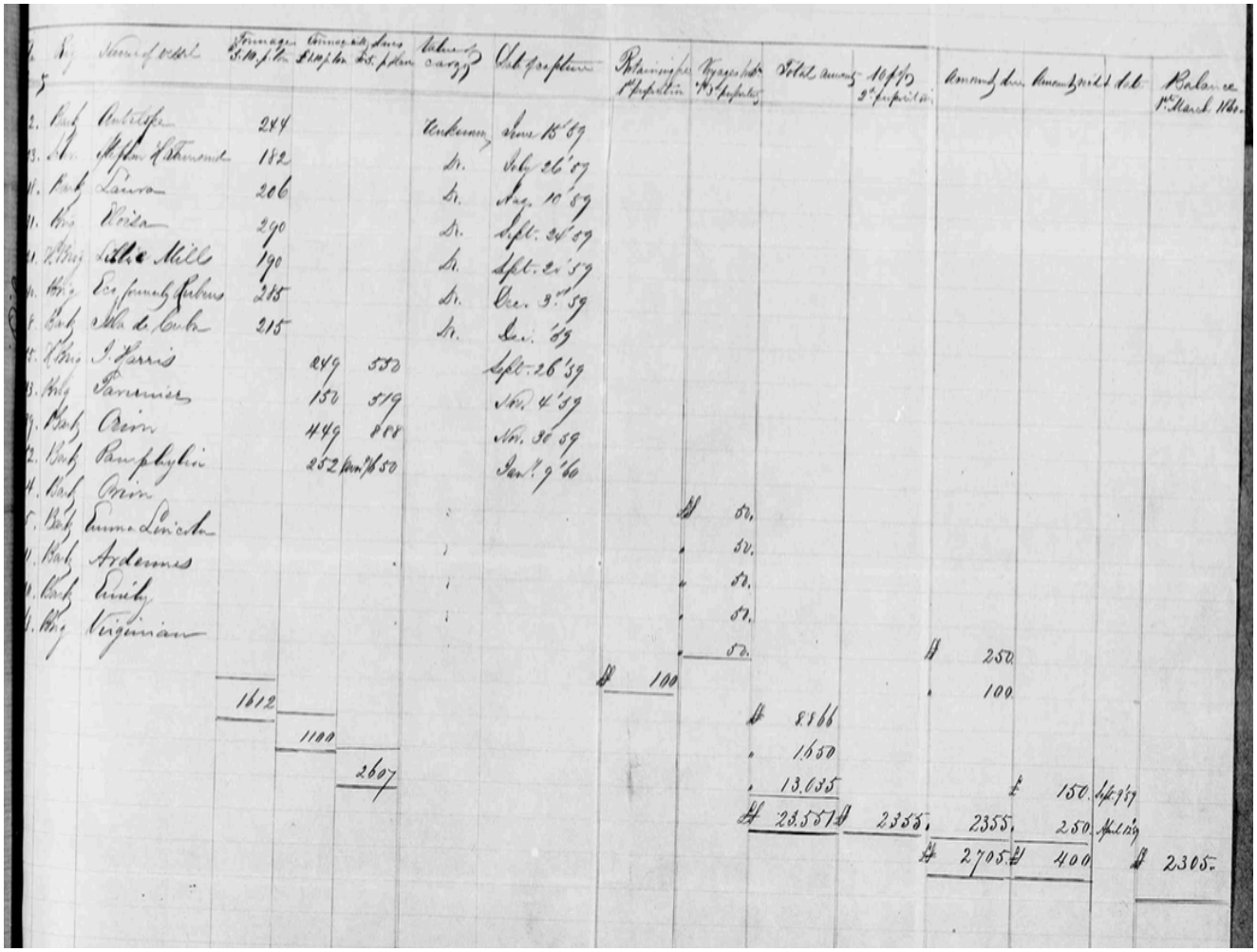
Sanchez was aware his information was making an important impact. By scouring his long list of newspapers, he learned that British and US cruisers were intercepting many of vessels that he had reported. In the spring of 1860, he wrote angrily to Archibald: "When the writer accepted the terms offered by the F.O. he was under the impression that he would be paid according to the contract." Indeed, he contended that the Foreign Office was guilty of "nonfulfillment of their part of the contract" and was "thereby keeping him in a false position."[178] Archibald sent Sanchez's complaints to the Foreign Office, but Wylde replied denying any wrong-doing and instructed Archibald not to pay Sanchez any more than the £400 rate.[179] Yet Sanchez did not drop the topic. In December 1860, he wrote to Archibald enclosing a "memorandum of captures." It listed the vessels on which he believed he was entitled to payment. The memo, shown in Figure 4.10, included 16 slavers, and indicated arrears of £2305. Archibald sent Sanchez's latest petition to London, but the Foreign Office refused to pay up.[180]

Despite Sanchez's frustrations, he kept working for the British government. Although he continued his quest for fair pay until 1863 (after his final contract expired), he does not appear to have considered quitting his job. On several occasions, he wrote to Archibald asking if the Foreign Office planned to extend his contract for another year. They agreed twice, and on both occasions, he took the offer. It was perhaps surprising that he did not request any amendments to the contract on either occasion, although by this point, he may have presumed that the Foreign Office would never agree to them, given their approach to his pay. He continued working on the same terms as before. His ongoing dedication to the task, despite the diminishing prospects of large payouts, the

[178] Sanchez to Archibald, Feb. 26, 1860, FO84/1111.
[179] They also blamed the Admiralty for "neglect[ing] to state on what information they made." Wylde Memo, Mar. 21, 1860, FO84/1111.
[180] Sanchez to Archibald, Dec. 4, 1860, FO84/1111. Perhaps sensing his chances were slim, Sanchez had omitted from his claim the 10 percent due on captives found aboard the slavers.

personal risks, and the detrimental effect to his own business, suggests he was deeply committed to suppressing the traffic.

Figure 4.10. *Sanchez's Claims on Sixteen Vessels*



Source: Sanchez to Archibald, Dec. 4, 1860, FO84/1111, TNA

Sanchez underlined this point in the summer of 1860, when he presented portions of his intelligence to the New York press. Between July and September, he wrote a series of detailed exposés of the trade for the New York *Evening Post*. Wishing to retain his anonymity, but also to

hint at his credentials, he wrote under the pseudonym "South Street," a main thoroughfare in Lower Manhattan, where the trade was active. In one of his early notes, he declared that he was determined to break up the slave trade in New York "single handed."[181] In another, he denounced several vessels as slavers and explained that 20 local firms were directly or indirectly involved in the trade.[182] On August 1, "South Street" appeared again, presenting a list of 85 slavers that had sailed "under the American flag" since February 1859.[183] The list, which included the names of the vessels' true owners, was one of the most detailed and accurate slave trade exposés ever published in the US. Unprepared to stop there, "South Street" then attacked officials he thought were abetting the trade. In early August, he accused a clearance clerk at New York's Custom House James De Graw of knowingly clearing slavers and not passing full information to the Associated Press.[184]

Sanchez's stunning foray into the public sphere was unauthorized by the British government. He had not discussed his new tactic with Archibald. Indeed, the articles took the consul completely by surprise. As Archibald reported to the Foreign Office, it was only while he was reading "South Street's" list of 85 vessels in the *Post*, that it dawned on him the information was "substantially the same as that already communicated by me [to London]."[185] Sanchez did not say why he had embarked on this mission without telling Archibald. Perhaps he felt Britain might try to curtail him or maybe he simply thought Britain had no right to interfere. In any case, Archibald or his superiors had few concerns about Sanchez's new tactic. The Foreign Office had financed the anti-slavery trade press in Rio and it was not about to stop Sanchez attacking the

[181] "South Street" referred to this earlier comment in New York *Evening Post*, Sept. 4, 1860.
[182] *Evening Post*, July 26, 1860.
[183] *Evening Post*, July 28, 1860.
[184] *Evening Post*, Aug. 5 and Aug. 16, 1860.
[185] Archibald to FO, July 31, 1860, FO84/1111.

traffic in New York for free. When Sanchez admitted that he was, indeed, "South Street", Archibald gave him his blessing, and he continued to publish in the *Post*.[186]

Sanchez's newspaper articles temporarily put New York traffickers and their accomplices under a new level of public scrutiny. They forced some individuals into the public sphere to defend themselves. One anonymous writer used the *Evening Post* to ask "South Street" why he included the *Louisa* in his list of slavers and "what proof" he had "that the owner is a foreigner."[187] Sanchez declined to substantiate his case, perhaps sensing this was an attempt to goad him into revealing his sources and thereby reveal himself. He had, however, given notice to New York's slave traders that he had the power to expose them publically. His articles even forced officials to publically protest their innocence. The clearance clerk, De Graw, wrote to both the *Evening Post* and another New York paper, *The World*, denying he was suppressing information on slavers.[188] Sanchez responded by dismissing De Graw's defense as "twaddle", and presenting even more accusations against him.[189]

Although Sanchez's letters were always aimed at specific individuals, such as De Graw, they quickly became wrapped up in national political debates. His notes got a lot of attention from a wide range of New York newspapers.[190] The topic of the illegal slave trade was attractive not just because it was secret and salacious, but because New York's press, and the nation more broadly, was deeply divided over the question of domestic slavery. The slave trade was a useful proxy for debates about the issue. On the one hand, Republican papers such as the *Post* opposed

[186] As he wrote optimistically to the Foreign Office, "the detailed information thus made public for the first time [may] increase public indignation in reference to it and may perhaps induce more vigilance and honest activity on the part of the Federal Officers." Archibald to FO, July 31, 1860, FO84/1111.
[187] *Evening Post*, n.d., enclosed in Archibald to FO, Feb. 5, 1861, FO84/1138.
[188] *Evening Post*, Aug. 8 & The *World*, Aug. 11, 1860.
[189] *Evening Post*, Aug. 16, 1860.
[190] The New York *Evening Express* was another paper to discuss his revelations. See *Evening Express*, Aug. 9, 1860.

the expansion of domestic slavery and blamed southern-friendly Democrats for abetting the slave trade from the US. On August 7, the *Post* supported "South Street," and referring to the presidential election in the fall, warned New York's slave traders that their time was "[al]most up."[191] On the other hand, some papers, which were more tied to mercantile interests, slavery, and the Democratic platform, were openly skeptical of "South Street's" *exposés*. The *Journal of Commerce*, for instance, slammed the "black Republican journals" for printing Sanchez's accusations and demanded "South Street" unveil himself.[192] The proslavery *Evening Express*, meanwhile, mocked "South Street", saying the trade was growing "the more he writes."[193]

Neither Sanchez nor the *Post* could win their respective battles in the summer of 1860. The *Express* had been incorrect to say the slave trade was growing; it actually fell marginally in the summer and fall. Yet the traffic was still taking place at a robust scale and Sanchez would be busy reporting departures from New York for another two years. In fact, US officials in New York do not appear to have been any more active in the summer of 1860, when Sanchez was writing, than in previous months. The mainly Portuguese and Cuban traffickers mentioned in Sanchez's list remained at large. De Graw, meanwhile, not only retained his job at the Custom House, but convinced the US government to allow him to start a suit against the *Post* to discover the identity of "South Street."[194] This development may have ushered Sanchez out of the pages of the *Post* in September 1860.

As Sanchez's failed campaign indicated, the demise of the slave trade in New York would ultimately come when the internal political circumstances changed in the US. Those changes led

[191] *Evening Post*, Aug. 7, 1860
[192] *Journal of Commerce*, reprinted in *Evening Express*, Aug. 9, 1860.
[193] *Evening Express*, Sept. 3, 1860.
[194] Sanchez to Archibald, Aug. 18, 1860, FO84/1111.

to the election of a Republican President, Abraham Lincoln, in 1861. His government would finally root out the slave traders from New York in 1862 and make a steadfast treaty allowing British cruisers to intercept American vessels. Ironically, as it did so, the British government found little use for Sanchez. In the spring of 1862, as the traffic faded from New York, Britain renewed his contract for only 3 months. When the contract elapsed at the end of May 1862, Sanchez's career as a spy was over. He had failed to break the slave trade, as he had promised the readers of the *Post*, but he had, at least, witnessed its demise.

Conclusion

Emilio Sanchez was an important member of an expansive British spy network that emerged in the 1830s and flourished in the 1850s. Confronting robust slaving axes in the mid-nineteenth century, Britain embraced spying as a subtle, but effective mode of suppression. After 1850, the Foreign Office gradually built up a small, yet effective network of informants that extended to every major slaving zone in the Atlantic basin. The alliances Britain forged with these spies were rarely based on shared values. Although Britain was ideologically opposed to the trade, many informants were out for revenge and money. Few wanted to suppress the trade completely, unless it meant destroying a foe. These differences did not, however, prevent Britain and spies working together. In the final phase of the trade, these complex alliances were an important feature of British suppression.

Britain's spy network could not have operated without broader global changes in the mid-nineteenth century. As British trade pushed further into distant markets, especially in the Americas and in Africa, it established an ever-growing network of ministers, consuls, and vice-consuls. By the mid-nineteenth century, these far-flung officials became the conduits for slave trade

information. The intelligence network was also undergirded by marked technological developments in the mid-nineteenth century. Steamships and railways, in particular, brought London in closer contact with its distant informants and cruisers. These technologies led to regular schedules, around which the network could revolve. Britain's interception of slavers such as the *Pamphylia* were not down to good intelligence alone – the information had to arrive on time.

What really mattered, however, was the globalization of anti-slave trade sentiment. By 1860, most nations had taken serious action to suppress the traffic, but Spain, the US, and several African polities had not. As long as these powers failed to earnestly tackle the traffic, slave traders continued to operate within their jurisdictions, despite the efforts of Britain and its spies. Although Sanchez had helped turn New York into a battleground over the trade, it was not a war that he could win without robust support from the US government. Sanchez may have grasped that point in 1860, when he began writing *exposés* about the traffic in the *Post*. These missives played a small part in stirring the ongoing and fractious national debate about the future of slavery in the US. Ultimately, it was the deep fissures over that question that moved the US towards Civil War and decisive American action against the trade in 1862.

Chapter 5

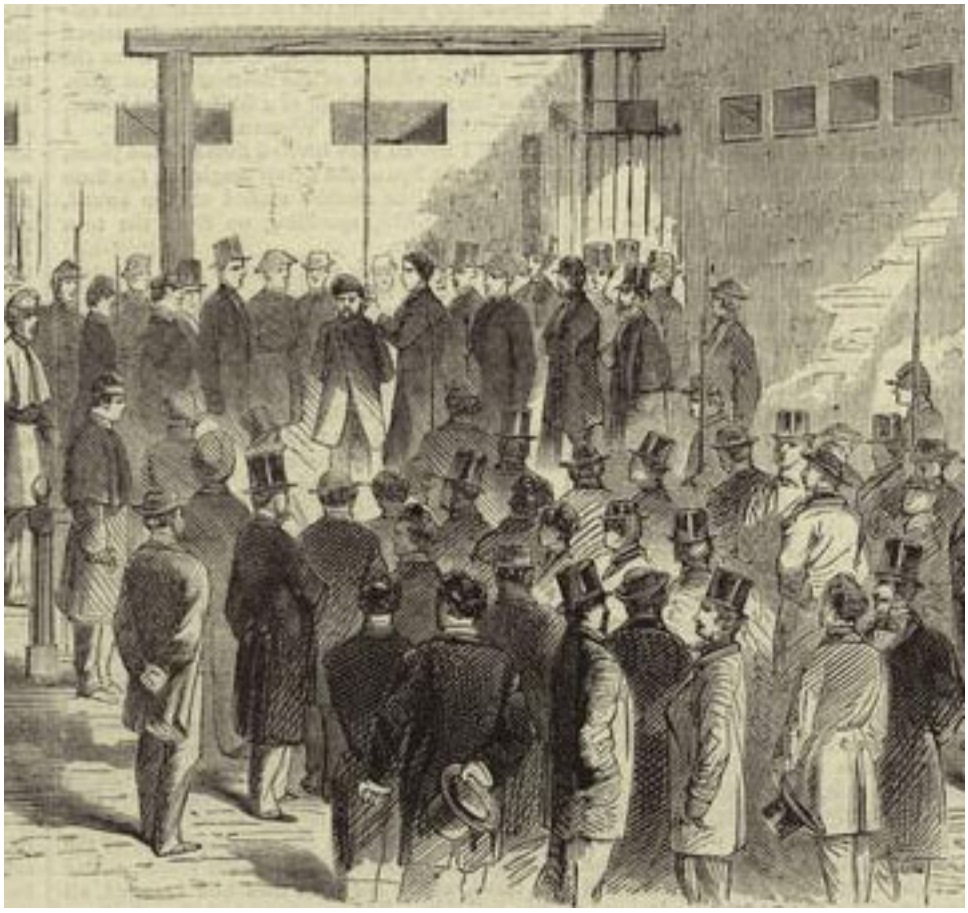
The Federal Government and the Suppression of the Slave Trade

On February 21, 1862, almost a year into the American Civil War, Nathaniel Gordon made his way to a specially erected scaffold at the Tombs, the notorious city jail in New York. Gordon, a veteran slave trading captain, had completed at least four illegal voyages during the past decade, reputedly earning him the nickname 'Lucky Nat' amongst his fellow traffickers in Manhattan. In 1860, however, Gordon's luck had run out. Upon exiting the Congo River aboard his ship the *Erie*, with almost 900 slaves, he was caught by a US cruiser. After the Navy returned him to New York, Gordon was prosecuted under the federal Act of 1820 by a vigorous and effective district attorney, Delafield Smith. Gordon was subsequently convicted by jury and sentenced to death. Despite pleas for mercy from scores of petitioners, including Gordon's wife, who were shocked by the severity of the sentence, President Abraham Lincoln, declined to grant a pardon.

The crowd that gathered to witness Gordon's final moments reflected how seriously the state was taking the case. As a sketch in *Harper's Weekly* shows, the execution yard was packed full (see Figure 5.1). The Chief Marshal, Robert Murray, the lead federal officer in New York, and his deputy, Adolphus Borst, were in charge of proceedings, and were in full uniform. Two state governors were also present, as was a judge and the superintendent of police. Outside the Tombs, policemen guarded the streets, while inside, 84 Marines blocked the approach to the yard. Although groggy from ingesting poison the night before (a failed last-minute suicide attempt), Gordon used his last words to damn the federal government for pursuing him, giving special mention to the district attorney, Smith. After he settled down, the executioner covered his head and placed the noose around his neck. A few moments later his body flew up and then down,

suspended in air. Gordon had just become the first, and last, slave trader to be executed under American law.[1]

Figure 5.1. *"The Execution of Gordon – The Slave Trader"*



Source: *Harper's Weekly*, Mar. 2, 1862

Gordon's career reflected the nature of suppression in the US during the mid-nineteenth century. When the Maine native first got into the business around 1850, the US was becoming

[1] *New York Times*, Feb. 22, 1862. See also Soodalter, Ron. *Hanging Captain Gordon: The Life and Trial of an American Slave Trader* (New York: Atria, 2006); James A. Rawley, "Captain Nathaniel Gordon, the Only American Executed for Violating the Slave Trade Laws," *Civil War History* 39, no. 3 (1993): 216-24.

more deeply involved in the illegal slave trade. Migrant traffickers from all over the Atlantic basin came to New York and other US ports to set up their business. Gradually, American vessels, such as the *Erie*, and American captains, such as Gordon, became vital components of the wider Atlantic illegal slave trade to Cuba. As this traffic grew, US suppression remained tepid at best, with some of the most effective work being done undercover by Sanchez on behalf of the British, rather than the American government itself. In this context, the traffic grew to unprecedented levels from New York and elsewhere. By 1862, however, when Gordon was executed by the US authorities, American suppression efforts had improved markedly. Shortly after his death, US participation in the slave trade ended for good.

Several historians have explored the connections between federal suppression and the stunning rise and fall of the American slave trade in the 1850s and 1860s. A century ago, W.E.B. Du Bois contended that proslavery interests in the South had conspired to forestall suppression in order to import large numbers of captives into their region, only to be overtaken by the Civil War, during which antislavery Republicans ended the slave trade and slavery in one fell swoop. More recently, Warren Howard and Don Fehrenbacher, rightly noting that the great majority of the US slave trade was based in northern ports and directed to Cuba, not the South, saw less a conspiracy than apathy both from the American government and the American people. In their view, final suppression came about mainly because Lincoln's administration sought diplomatic support from Britain during the Civil War. Most recently, Leonardo Marques has argued that during the 1850s, Democrats had little interest in suppressing the traffic because to do so would entail conceding the Right of Search to the British. Serious action on the slave trade only came, Marques contends, when the Republicans used the rising slave trade to accuse Democrats of being proslavery

extremists, and then finally, after secession, when they were in power and could act on their antislavery inclinations.[2]

The following chapter builds on existing work, especially by Du Bois and Marques, to show that slave trade suppression was deeply tied to the domestic politics of slavery. During the mid-nineteenth century, the central issue in American politics was the future of slavery at home. The nation was shaken by several crises over this question, from the Compromise of 1850 right up to the final sectional split in 1861. These flashpoints typically occurred when the question of slavery expansion or restriction was at hand. Proslavery agitators, typically supported by the Democratic Party, saw the expansion of slavery as necessary for its survival, while the antislavery party, the Republicans, sought to restrict slavery by way of eventually killing the 'peculiar institution.'[3] The slave trade issue intersected with the question of slavery expansion in important ways. On the one hand, Democrats, who sought to acquire Cuba as a slave state, blamed Spain for the traffic, rather than themselves, in order to bolster their case for taking the island. This narrative deemphasized the US role in the trade and put suppression on the back burner. By contrast, Republicans viewed the presence of the slave trade in US ports and the small, but much-reported, efforts to reopen the slave trade to the South as heralding a future wherein slavery expanded unchecked throughout the US. Party positions on the critical question of slavery's expansion or restriction was, in other words, the major issue shaping suppression at the federal level. Under

[2] W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the US of America, 1638-1870* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1896), 168-193; Warren Howard, *American Slavers and the Federal Law, 1837-1862* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press: 1963); Don Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic: An Account of the US Government's Relations to Slavery* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 135-204; Leonardo Marques, *The US*, 219-255.

[3] For more on this point, see James Oakes, *Freedom National: The Destruction of Slavery in the US, 1851-1865* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2013).

these conditions, it was no surprise that suppression proved weak during the 1850s under Democratic administrations and strong under Lincoln's Republican government from 1861.

The foregoing argument is made in four sections. The first shows how suppression was ultimately in the hands of the federal government and examines the scope and limits of the American suppression effort during midcentury, both at home and aboard. The second part explores the prevailing view of the slave trade from the Democratic party, the main legislative and executive force at the federal level up to the late 1850s. It also shows how that view powerfully shaped federal approaches to suppression. The third section analyses the view of the slave trade from the other major force in American politics during midcentury, the Republican Party. The final part assesses the impact of the Democratic and Republican administrations' assaults on the slave trade from 1859 to 1864. The latter was much more robust than the former, and resulted in the final elimination of US participation in the trade.

The scope and limits of US suppression

The federal government held ultimate legal responsibility for suppressing American participation in the illegal slave trade. Although several states took action against the traffic in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, federal statutes took precedence over state law. These federal Acts dated back to the Early Republic, and included the Act of 1808, which outlawed the traffic, and the most recent law, the Act of 1820, which declared the trade piracy. In combination, these laws prohibited Americans from participating in a wide range of slaving trading activity, such as investing in voyages, owning slavers, and serving aboard them. They also stipulated punishments for offenders, ranging from fines to imprisonment, and in the case of the Act of 1820, execution.

When Congress created federal anti-slave trade law, therefore, it was fairly broadly conceived, and in theory at least, had real teeth.

Several federal departments shared the work of enforcing these laws. The Department of the Interior took the lead, although the departments of State, Navy, and Treasury, as well as the Attorney General's office, all played important roles. At the local level, much of the legwork fell to US marshals who policed the trade in American ports and district attorneys who argued cases in federal courts. These cases typically involved criminal convictions against suspected slave traders or libel actions against slave trading vessels. The former cases were heard by juries; the latter were adjudicated by federal judges. Both kinds of cases were usually heard in the jurisdiction where the offence had allegedly taken place, meaning the Southern District of New York heard by far the most cases. Further afield, the Navy tackled the US slave trade on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, while US diplomats were responsible for helping check American slaving in foreign jurisdictions.[4]

Despite enjoying considerable early success, this remarkably diffuse suppression campaign was struggling by the mid-nineteenth century. US participation in the slave trade had been minimal during the 1820s and early 1830s, when few Americans were directly involved in the traffic and only a small number of vessels brought captives to US shores. By the 1840s, however, American ships and the American flag frequently appeared in the much larger illegal trades to Brazil and Cuba. Although the Brazilian traffic collapsed in 1850, the US subsequently took on an enlarged role in the traffic to Cuba. Over the next decade or so, New York and New Orleans emerged as major outfitting ports and financial hubs, largely due to the efforts of Portuguese and Spanish

[4] Finkelman, Paul. "Regulating the African Slave Trade." *Civil War History* 54, no. 4 (2008): 379–405; Howard, *American Slavers*, 258-60; Marques, *The US*, 23-28, 45-55, 91-101; Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic*, 135-204.

immigrants. Meanwhile, slave traders' use of American vessels and the US flag grew substantially and American citizens began serving aboard slavers in greater numbers. Although only two vessels brought captives to American shores after 1850, overall, the US was playing a bigger and more varied role in the illegal slave trade that at any time since the Act of 1820.[5]

As US connections to the trade increased after 1850, several problems with federal suppression became increasingly apparent. One accusation, leveled by several American newspapers and at least one US Senator, Henry Wilson, from Massachusetts, was that federal marshals in US ports were deeply complicit in the trade.[6] These charges were given credence in the spring of 1860 when two deputy marshals in New York, Theodore Rynders and Henry Munn, were impeached and discharged for gross misconduct. The pair were found guilty of accepting a $1,500 bribe from slave traders on the East River in exchange for letting the slaver *Storm King* sail safely out of port, bound for Africa.[7] The episode caused a sensation in the New York press and caused several newspapers to call for a general inquisition into the local marshals' office.[8]

Meanwhile, Rynders' brother, Isaiah Rynders, the chief marshal in New York, also came under the scrutiny of the press. In late 1860, Rynders was implicated in the escape of a suspected slave trader, Morgan Fredericks, from custody. Fredericks had been first mate aboard the *Cora*, a slaver that had been captured by an American cruiser near the Congo River in the fall. After the interception, the Navy dispatched the vessel and crew to New York for adjudication and trial. Upon their arrival, Rynders held the crew aboard the *Cora* in the federal Navy Yard, but late one

[5] For these changes, see Marques, *The US*. For an analysis of the Early Republic, see Hollander, Craig. "Against a Sea of Troubles" (Ph.D Dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 2012).
[6] See slips in Archibald to FO, May 8, 1860, FO84/1111. For Wilson, see *NYT*, June 16, 1860.
[7] The US vs. Theodore Rynders and Henry Munn: Indictment, US Circuit Court for the Southern District of New York, Criminal Case Files, RG 21, NARA NY; *NYT*, May 7, 1860.
[8] See slips in Archibald to FO, May 8, 1860, FO84/1111.

December night Fredericks escaped and promptly disappeared. Rynders' implausible explanation was that Fredericks must have escaped by leaping into the ice-laden waters and swimming several hundred yards to shore. A subsequent investigation indicated, however, that a boat had actually run alongside the *Cora* and spirited Fredericks away. Sensing a deeper conspiracy, the *New York Times* called for Rynders' "instant removal" from office. [9] Rynders survived, however, and completed his five-year tenure as chief marshal the following year.[10]

Other functionaries also faced accusations of corruption, negligence, or incompetence. In early 1861, the *New York Times* assailed New York District Attorney, James Roosevelt, for botching the prosecution of traffickers by filing flawed indictments.[11] On one famous occasion, Roosevelt had even encouraged a jury to convict a defendant under the Act of 1820 on the basis that the president at the time, James Buchanan, would probably commute the death sentence. Although probably true, this entreaty not only smacked of desperation, but suggested that the federal government believed its own laws were overly severe.[12] The episode led New York lawyer George Templeton Strong to question in his diary: "is Judge Roosevelt more deficient in common sense or moral sense?"[13] Meanwhile, the *New York Tribune* accused judges, especially Samuel Betts in New York, of blocking the confiscation of slaving vessels and the conviction of slave traders because he was sympathetic to the traffickers.[14] Others observers, including Emilio Sanchez, the well-informed British spy in New York, accused clearance clerks in the City's

[9] *NYT*, March 18, 1861.
[10] Isaiah Rynders to Abraham Lincoln, Mar 25, 1861, RG60, Letters Received, 1809-1870, Box 115: NY 1856-1861, NARA, Washington DC.
[11] *NYT*, Mar. 18, 1861
[12] *NYT*, Dec. 27, 1860
[13] Entry on Nov. 2, 1860, in Phillip Lopate ed., *Writing New York: A Literary Anthology* (New York, NY: Washington Square Press,1998), 219.
[14] See *NYTr*, July 10, 1857; Howard, *American Slavers*, 155-9.

Custom House of deliberately concealing information about when slavers were leaving port. These omissions, he argued, were made at the behest of local traffickers and prevented marshals from stopping vessels and their men before they left port.[15]

Although some officials did fail to execute their duties honestly or adroitly, they were also struggling with the shortcomings of the laws against the trade. As Don Fehrenbacher and Leonardo Marques have contended, district attorneys, especially, were hampered by the broad construction of the federal statutes.[16] One particular problem was that none of the federal statutes specifically banned ships from carrying items (or 'equipment' as it was then known), that were designed for slave-trading purposes. Much of this equipment, including extra lumber and large quantities of food and water, was essential for conducting voyages and was easily recognizable to authorities. Indeed, other nations had incorporated so-called 'equipment clauses' into their anti-slave trade laws and treaties precisely for these reasons. The absence of such clauses in US statutes had a detrimental effect on suppression. Although district attorneys used the presence of equipment in their prosecutions, it proved insufficient evidence on which to base a criminal conviction or even the condemnation of a slaver. As a result, marshals in New York and elsewhere often let vessels sail from port even although they knew they were fully equipped for the trade.[17]

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[15] See chapter 4. Further afield, British officials impugned US consuls in Havana, and elsewhere, for rubber stamping sales of American vessels to Cuban slave traders and claimed American naval officers were uncommitted to suppressing the trade at sea.

[16] Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic*, 175-6, 191-199; Marques, *The US*, 207-216; Peter Graham Fish, *Federal Justice in the Mid-Atlantic South: US Courts from Maryland to the Carolinas, 1836-1861* (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2015); Sparks, "Blind Justice," 71-2.

[17] The issue also impeded the African Squadron, whose officers were concerned about being sued by shipowners when libels against their ships, although fully equipped for the slave trade, were not sustained in US courts. See William McBlair on his capture of *Wm G Lewis*, McBlair to Mrs. William McBlair, Nov. 16, 1857, William McBlair Papers, Mariners Museum Library, Newport News, Virginia. Thanks to Joe Mosier for making me aware of this source; Howard, *American Slavers*, 102-110; Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic*, 175-6. Donald Canney, *Africa Squadron*, 94-5.

The libel prosecution of the US vs. the *Isla de Cuba* in 1859 indicates the challenges faced by district attorneys. In this instance, the vessel, a barque, had reached the African coast when the crew decided they didn't want to go through with the slaving voyage. Instead, they launched a remarkable rebellion against the Portuguese supercargo, setting him adrift in a small boat, and then sailing to Boston and surrendering the vessel. The barque was carrying a large quantity of lumber, barrels of water, and several large cauldrons. These items were clearly meant for building a slave deck and provisioning captives, but the counsel for the defense, acting for the owner, Cunha Reis, contended otherwise. Using testimony from several merchants engaged in the Africa trade from New York, who were themselves involved directly and indirectly in the slave trade, the defense explained to the Boston court that the lumber was a common trade good on the African coast, that the barrels were used merely to ballast ships as they crossed the Atlantic Ocean, and that the cauldrons were meant for boiling African palm oil before it was carried back to the US. Ultimately, the court rejected these arguments thanks, mainly, to the extraordinary testimony of the crew, but few cases were as open and shut.[18]

Even after successful libel cases such as the *Isla de Cuba*'s, slaving vessels often ended up back in the traffickers' hands. Once the courts had condemned these slavers, marshals were required to sell them in the open market on behalf of the state. In many cases, slave traders simply purchased them again. After the *Isla de Cuba* was confiscated in 1859, for example, it was sold at auction and bought by its former owners.[19] Some observers believed that slave traders actually cornered the market for condemned slavers. After Fredericks' vessel, the *Cora*, was condemned in 1861, the *New York Times* reported it was "sold at one of those practically private sales, only

[18] US v. Island of Cuba, Bark et al, Case Files, 1790 – 1917, Record Group 21: Records of District Courts of the US, 1685 – 2009, NARA, Waltham, Ma.
[19] Enclosed in Archibald to Malmesbury, Apr. 5, 1859, FO84/1086.

attended by our slave-trading merchants [and] … at once refitted for another slave-trading voyage." Not long thereafter, the *Cora* was again captured near Virginia by a US official, Captain Faunce, who, the *Times* reported, "discovered on board of her all the usual insignia of the traffic in human ebony."[20]

Another limitation of the federal statutes was their focus on citizenship. According to Section 5 of the Act of 1820, criminal convictions could be sustained only against American citizens or anyone serving aboard a slaver owned by a US citizen. In many cases, district attorneys saw their cases fall apart because they couldn't prove that the defendant or the vessel's owners were Americans. Foreign nationals, especially Spanish and the Portuguese immigrants, who were deeply involved in the trade in US ports, were typically not naturalized US citizens. According to District Attorney John McKeon in New York, some traffickers, including the Portuguese Pedro da Cunha, underlined the point by pretending they could not speak English in court.[21] The second part of Section 5, relating to US ownership of vessels, was also difficult to prove. Some sham purchases of slavers were carried out by obscure individuals, whose citizenship district attorneys found difficult to ascertain.[22] Other buyers were not US citizens at all, and had claimed to be Americans at Custom Houses only to gain US papers for their vessels before sailing for Africa. Moreover, there was an added protection for those claiming citizenship of another nation: since the US did not hold extradition treaties with Spain, Portugal, or Brazil, they could not be sent

[20] *NYT*, Mar.18, 1861
[21] McKeon to JB Sheeter, Mar. 29, 1856, NY Southern District, Box 80, 1856-1860, RG206, Letters Rcd from US District Attorneys, Marshals, and Clerks of Court, 1801-1898, NARA, D.C.
[22] See District Attorney John McKeon's attempts to chase up Captain James Smith's naturalization records in the fall of 1854. McKeon to Oct 31, 1854, RG60, Letters Received, 1809-1870, Box 113, NARA, DC.

abroad for trial. As a result, they held a kind of international immunity from prosecution while they remained in the US.[23]

The trial of captain James Smith in 1854 illustrates how the citizenship issue complicated prosecutions. During opening remarks, District Attorney McKeon stated that he had indicted Smith under the Act of 1820. Then, laying out his case, he argued that Smith had captained the brig *Julia Moulton* from New York earlier that year and delivered around 600 captive Africans to Cuba. McKeon also stressed that Smith was a US citizen. In response, Smith's attorney, Charles O'Conor, strikingly ignored what McKeon said about the voyage, but hotly disputed the citizenship issue. To bolster his case, he paraded a host of Smith's friends and relatives who claimed he had been born in Germany and had only lived in the US for three years. Since naturalization could occur only after five years under American law, this meant Smith could not be a US citizen. McKeon countered that Smith's American citizenship was proved by an oath that he had taken at the New York Custom House before departing on the voyage, but O'Conor said that Smith had simply lied. After deliberating on the case, the jury found Smith guilty, but the magistrate, Justice Samuel Nelson, subsequently granted Smith a retrial on the grounds that he had not been sufficiently clear in his charge to the jury that the central issue at hand was Smith's citizenship. Perhaps realizing the citizenship question was quicksand, McKeon struck a deal with the defense, offering Smith a guilty plea under a lesser charge under the Act of 1800. Smith accepted McKeon's offer and served just two years in jail.[24]

[23] For more on this issue, see Marques, *The US*, 219-222.
[24] For more on this case, see US vs. James Smith, Criminal Case Files, US Circuit Court for the Southern District of New York, RG 21, NARA NY; Robert McClelland to John McKeon, Oct 7, 1854 & July 18, 1855, RG48, Letters Sent Concerning the Judiciary, 1854-1869, Box 1: Jan 25, 1854 to Mar 6, 1856, Book 2; *NYT*, Nov. 7, 9, 10, 1854; Howard, *American Slavers*, 192-6; Leo Marques, *The US*, 209-10.

The problems with federal law and its enforcers would dog suppression in courtrooms up to the Civil War. As Warren Howard has shown, during the ten years between 1851 and 1860, 152 individuals were indicted under slave trade laws in US courts.[25] Of this number, 63 were tried and acquitted, found their jury deadlocked, or were released after the jury was unable to find a bill against them. Prosecutors failed to pursue cases against a further 39 indicted prisoners, probably owing to the slim chances of conviction. Only 12 individuals were tried and convicted; often, as in the case of Smith, on minor charges and with relatively light punishments. All defendants avoided execution, the penalty stipulated by the Act of 1820. Meanwhile, an additional 9 defendants, including Fredericks, escaped custody, either before trial, while released on bail, or after sentencing. Prosecutors had more success in libel cases, largely because the evidentiary standards were lower than in criminal trials. Yet even here, only about half of libeled vessels were confiscated by courts; 33 out of 67 between 1851 and 1860. Moreover, many condemned vessels, such as the *Isla de Cuba*, simply ended up back in the hands of slave traders. This grim picture becomes darker still when one considers that the statistics above do not take account of the large number of traffickers and vessels that escaped the justice system altogether.[26]

While US suppression struggled at home, it was also laboring overseas. Several federal statutes directed Congress to suppress American involvement in the slave trade at sea, and by the mid-1850s two of the Navy's five squadrons included suppression within their remits.[27] The first of these fleets, the Home Squadron, theoretically covered both US waters and the Caribbean. The main field of labor clearly lay in the latter region, where Cuba, unlike the US, remained a major

[25] Resulting in 52 cases. Howard, *American Slavers*, 227-235.
[26] Information drawn from Howard, *American Slavers*, 213-235.
[27] A third fleet, the Brazil Squadron, wound down its suppression operations in South American waters after the closure of the Brazilian traffic in 1850. On this Squadron, see Canney, *Africa Squadron*, 111-120, 234.

importer of slaves, and use of American vessels was rampant. Despite these trends, the Navy rarely sent any of the Squadron's eight vessels into Caribbean waters before 1859. The misdirection of resources rendered the fleet almost impotent. Of the hundreds of American vessels bringing captives to Cuba, the Home Squadron intercepted just two slavers between 1850 and 1860, the *Putnam* in 1858 and the *Cygnet* in 1859.[28]

The second US fleet, the Africa Squadron, was barely more successful. Guided by the Act of 1819, Congress had been sending cruisers to fight the slave trade in African waters since the 1820s. This was a puny force, usually one or two vessels, and was also responsible for protecting American commerce and supporting the new colony of Liberia, which was closely tied to the American Colonization Society. In 1842, after years of neglect and in response to slave traders' growing use of the US flag (as well as mounting international pressure), President Tyler's administration signed the Webster-Ashburton Treaty. This accord did not grant British cruisers the right to search American vessels for slaves, a concession the British desperately sought, but did pledge that both nations would maintain a "sufficient and adequate squadron" on the African coast, carrying at least eighty guns.[29]

Despite giving birth to a formalized US Africa Squadron, the Webster-Ashburton Treaty did not create a robust American suppression force on the African coast. Successive navy secretaries, including Abel P. Upshur, who later became secretary of state, took advantage of the

[28] On American naval suppression, see Canney, *Africa Squadron*; Howard, *American Slavers*, 41-4, 70-84, and appendices; John Randolph Spears, *The American Slave Trade*, 148-159. The American Navy was small compared to those of other maritime powers, such as Britain, however, and was primarily concerned with protecting US commerce rather than suppressing the slave trade. Canney, *Africa Squadron*, 56-7. For a damning assessment of US suppression at sea, see Randy Sparks, "Blind Justice," 60-2, 75-7.

[29] On the Webster-Ashburton Treaty, see Fehrenbacher, *Slaveholding Republic*, 165-72; Marques, *The US*, 156-8; Richard MacMaster, *The US, Great Britain and the Suppression of the Cuban Slave Trade* (PhD Dissertation, Georgetown *University*, 1968), 154-203.

Treaty's wording to minimize their outlay of vessels and men. Noting that the Treaty stipulated a minimum number of guns, not cruisers, the US Navy sent only three to five vessels rather than a larger and probably more effective fleet. By contrast, the British WAS typically numbered around thirty vessels. Underlining the US's weak commitment to the Treaty, the entire US squadron carried fewer than the stipulated eighty guns during much of the 1840s and 1850s.[30]

Successive American administrations compounded the problem of the Squadron's skimpiness by sending unsuitable vessels to patrol the coast. At a time when traffickers were using increasingly fast vessels, the Navy sent a few bulky frigates (which carried almost all the guns), as well as brigs and sloops. Commander William McBlair, who toiled aboard the sloop USS *Dale* in 1857*,* complained bitterly about the inadequacy of the Squadron's sailing vessels. Writing to his wife, Virginia, in Maryland, McBlair noted that suspicious vessels bolted as soon as they saw American cruisers. Since these cruisers were unable to catch the faster slavers in a chase, they were effectively, he said, "mere scarecrows."[31] What McBlair and his fellow commanders sought, and regularly requested, were small steamers, which were both fast and maneuverable, but such pleas were routinely ignored in Washington. The frustrated McBlair, who only managed to capture one slaver, the *William G. Lewis*, during his two-year cruise, frankly concluded: "Our squadron is a farce."[32]

[30] Canney, *Africa Squadron*, 41, 50-1. Howard, 239-40. Prior to the Treaty, Webster had asked Lieutenants Paine and Bell, commanders of warships in African waters, about the best strategies for suppressing the trade. They proposed a squadron of fifteen vessels, mainly composed of fast schooners. They also suggested granting Britain the right to visit, though not to search, American-flagged vessels, to determine their true nationality. Webster roundly ignored these proposals.

[31] William McBlair to Mrs. William McBlair, Oct. 29, 1857, William McBlair Papers, Mariners Museum Library, Newport News, Virginia. Thanks to Joe Mosier for making me aware of this source.

[32] William McBlair to Mrs. William McBlair, Sept. 25, 1857, William McBlair Papers, Mariners Museum Library.

Another major deficiency was the location of the Squadron's base at Porto Praya in the Cape Verde Islands. The Navy chose this location off the Upper Guinea coast in the early 1840s because it had a resident US consul and was conveniently positioned along the shipping routes from the US and Europe.[33] Yet the Islands were located far from the main slaving grounds, especially as the slave trade shifted further southward and became more heavily concentrated in West Central Africa. This meant that cruisers had to sail for at least a month to reach the key slave embarkation zone, only to return for resupply a few months later.[34] As a result, only one or two US cruisers were actually in the main slaving grounds at any given time. Frederick Grey, the commander of the British WAS made the point to his brother, the former British Secretary of War, in1857, complaining that "instead of having a force of suitable vessels as they are bound [by Treaty] a cruiser is seldom seen on the coast."[35] The Navy recognized the problem and discussed moving the depot to Luanda or to St. Helena in the early 1850s, but the Navy Secretary, William Graham, decided to wait and see whether the entire trade would collapse in the wake of Brazilian suppression before making a decision.[36] The push to relocate the Squadron waned, however, even as the trade to Cuba continued into the 1850s. Meanwhile, the fleet contained its poor performance. Between its creation in 1843 and 1858, the African Squadron captured just 20 slavers.[37] By contrast, the large British fleet, which was based in Luanda captured over 500 slavers during the same period.[38]

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[33] Howard, *American Slavers*, 42-3.
[34] For sailing times, see Foote, *The Slave Trade*, 351-3
[35] F. W. Grey to 3rd Earl Grey, Aug 11, 1857, GRE/B98/4/5-7, Papers of Henry George, 3rd Earl Grey, Durham University Archives.
[36] Canney, *Africa Squadron*, 138; Howard, *American Slavers*, 48.
[37] Canney, *Africa Squadron*, 233.
[38] Lloyd, *The Slave Trade*, 275-6. For a more favorable assessment of the Africa Squadron, see Fehrenbacher, *Slaveholding Republic*, 175.

A final, flawed, element of overseas suppression was the constraints placed on US officials. These diplomats, including ministers, consuls, and vice-consuls, were widely spread throughout the Atlantic basin. Many operated in Cuba and the Iberian Peninsula, where the majority of American slavers stopped during the 1850s and 1860s before arriving on the African coast, often to change ownership and to take on crew and supplies. Unlike their British counterparts, American consuls were generally not active combatants in the fight against the slave trade. Their approach was guided largely from Washington, where the State Department and Attorney General's Office made clear that consuls were not to interfere with the sale or clearance of vessels abroad if those transactions were not objected to by local authorities. American representatives were also often under considerable pressure in foreign ports, especially in Cuba, where public opinion was largely in favor of the slave trade. In this context, busy markets for American slave ships such as Havana were barely disrupted by US consuls. On occasion, American officials, such as Thomas Savage, acting-consul general in Havana in 1858, made earnest attempts to check the traffic by refusing the clearances of several US vessels, but in most instances they rarely intervened vigorously.[39]

US suppression was therefore patchy at best during the decade up to 1860. At home, marshals and district attorneys, though not without fault themselves, struggled with the limitations imposed by the law. Congress had not updated these statutes since 1820, when the shape of the slave trade was very different. In 1859, after another failed trial against a slave captain, and as the traffic rose to record levels, the New York *Tribune* opined: "at present we can hardly be said to have any laws against the African Slave Trade."[40] The *Tribune* exaggerated; the Acts had some success and probably discouraged some Americans from entering the traffic. But they did not

[39] On consuls, including the role of Savage, during this period, see Marques, *The US*, 207-9; Howard, *American Slavers*, 45-6, 111-123.
[40] Enclosed in Archibald to Malmesbury, May 30, 1859, FO84/1086 or is this NYH (see press doc)

constitute effective legislation. US suppression was similarly languishing abroad. Successive administrations failed to make naval suppression a priority or to press their diplomats to take a firmer line against the traffic in foreign ports. The following sections will address why the Congress failed to take the necessary action to address these problems.

American Expansionism and the Slave Trade

For much of the 1850s, US suppression was powerfully shaped by American ambitions in Cuba. Encouraged by the westward and southward expansion of the US during the 1830s and 1840s and having witnessed the impressive development of the Cuban slave economy, many Americans, especially southerners, contended that Cuba ought to be incorporated into the US. This view had been popular in policy circles since the Early Republic, but a new phase of Cuba agitation was beginning. The mid-nineteenth century was the height of Manifest Destiny, the belief that US territorial expansion was justified and inevitable. The Democratic Party, which supported American expansion, dominated the presidency and Congress during much of 1840s and the especially the 1850s. After the annexation of Texas in 1845, prominent Democrats, including President James Polk, argued forcefully that Spain should relinquish control of the island. They also offered to purchase the island, though Spain, having experienced the disintegration of its American empire a generation before, and fully appreciating the value of the 'Pearl of the Antilles,' rejected all US proposals.[41]

Spain's refusals to sell Cuba led some American expansionists and frustrated Latin American revolutionaries to believe that the island would have to be taken by force. To that end,

[41] Basil Rauch, *American Interest in Cuba: 1848-1855* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), 55-101.

in 1850, Narcisco López, a Venezuelan, who favored annexation of Cuba to the US, sailed from New Orleans to the island with a band of six hundred southern expansionists and Cuban creole revolutionaries. Landing in the island's shore, they took the town of Cardenas in northern Cuba before Spanish troops forced their retreat back to Louisiana. Although the expedition failed to inspire the creole revolt López had envisioned, he and his men enjoyed a rapturous welcome on his return to New Orleans. In 1851, he made a second expedition, but this too failed and ended in his public garroting in Havana.[42]

Despite López's grisly demise, the 'Cuba Question' would remain a central matter of American foreign policy for the rest of the decade. In 1853, President Franklin Pierce initially offered his tacit support to a López-style invasion by the pro-slavery Mississippi adventurer and imperialist, John Quitman. Pierce eventually demurred, however, preferring to spend political capital on securing slavery in Kansas, a goal he achieved with the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854. Only temporarily sidetracked, the following year, Pierce authorized Louisianan Pierre Soulé, his minister in Madrid, to offer Spain up to $130 million for the island. He also explained that if Spain refused, Soulé should work toward "the next desirable object, which is to detach that island from the Spanish dominion." When Spain did decline the offer, Soulé met with James Buchanan and John Mason, American ministers in Britain and France, in Ostend, Belgium, and penned a memorandum, which became known as the Ostend Manifesto. This Manifesto stated that the incorporation of Cuba into the US was "necessary" and that should the crown refuse to sell the

[42] Davis quote in James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988). For rising annexationism from the mid-1840s, see Hermino Portell Villa, *Narcisco López y su epoca* (La Habana, 1930); Tom Chaffin, *Fatal Glory: Narcisco López and the First Clandestine US War Against Cuba* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1996). See also, Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld: Filibustering in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill, NC: UNC Press, 2002); May, *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire 1854-1861* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973); Basil Rauch, *American Interest in Cuba: 1848-1855* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948). MacMaster, *The US*, 257-95.

island, the US would "by every law, human and Divine [be] justified in wresting it from Spain." Pierce's administration faced criticism at home and abroad when the Manifesto became public and did not turn that threat into action. Nevertheless, Buchanan went on to become president from 1856 to 1860, and would make the acquisition of Cuba a key plank of his foreign policy.[43]

As agitation over Cuba intensified, many expansionists used the issue of the illegal slave trade to bolster their case for acquiring the island. They were building on a firm foundation. Americans were well aware that the traffic to Cuba was ongoing, with newspapers' foreign correspondents and travelers reporting the latest clandestine landings. Moreover, for much of the late 1840s and early to mid-1850s, almost all American sources blamed Spain for allowing this trade to endure. According to these reports, Spanish officials in Cuba were deeply involved in the traffic. Captain generals were singled out for particularly strong criticism. In an article first printed in the fiery expansionist newspaper the *New Orleans Delta* in 1850 and widely reprinted elsewhere, the Captain General, Conde Alcoy, was accused of receiving a sack of money worth $20,000 in exchange for the landing of 600 slaves. The *Norfolk Democrat* of Dedham, Massachusetts, had a similar take. Referring to all senior Spanish officials in Cuba, the *Democrat* explained that after becoming "millionaires" through the slave trade, "[t]hese nabobs then generally return to Spain to spend their ill-gotten fortunes, leaving a crop of clerks to follow in the footsteps of their inhuman predecessors." According to this perspective, Spain was able, but unwilling to suppress the traffic. As the *Constitution* of Middleton, Connecticut, argued: "Money

[43] McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom.* For more on Cuba during Pierce's administration, see Matthew Karp, *This Vast Southern Empire: Slaveholders at the Helm of American Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 189-198 & Piero Gleijeses, "Clashing over Cuba: The US, Spain and Britain" *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 49, 2, 2016: 215-241.

has more than once prevailed over law, and no Government has been more susceptible to its influence than that of Spain."[44]

These arguments were given further weight by Cubans themselves. Creole exiles brought the message directly to American audiences. *La Verdad*, a newspaper founded by Cuban creoles in New York in 1848, and published in both Spanish and English, consistently denounced the Spanish government for the slave trade, often deploying the arguments advanced by the reformist Cuban writer, José Antonio Saco. Meanwhile, in New Orleans, an associate of Narcisco López, Matanzas-born Ambrosio José Gonzales, published a *Manifesto on Cuban Affairs Addressed to the People of the US* in 1853, calling for Cuban independence. Listing his grievances, including excessive taxation and the use of military courts for criminal offenses, he complained about the ongoing slave trade to Cuba, which, he contended, continued, "for the special benefit of the Queen Mother, the Captain-General, and a powerful Spanish clique in Havana." Back in New York, in January 1854, Lorenzo Allo, a Professor of Political Economy, gave a speech to the Cuban Democratic Athenaeum of New York decrying Spanish rule in Cuba in general and its role in the slave trade in particular. Demanding the cessation of the traffic, Allo argued that the "trade will continue in Cuba whilst the Spanish government rules there, since it serves it policy and its treasury."[45] The Spanish government took these critics seriously. In response, it published denials

[44] The *Philadelphia Inquirer* agreed that "the agent of the Queen Mother of Spain was and is actually engaged in the infamous traffic." *Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 12, 1850; *New Orleans Delta*, Aug. 2, 1850; *Norfolk Democrat* (Dedham, Mass), Mar. 3, 1853; *NYH*, Aug. 22, 1858; *Constitution* (Middletown, Ct): Mar. 17, 1852; NYT, Apr 7, 1852. Richard MacMaster contends that anti-British sentiment was the chief rhetorical devise used by expansionists regarding the Cuba question. See MacMaster, *The US*, 257-95. For more on the *NYT* position on Cuba, see *NYT*, Nov. 27, 1852.

[45] José Antonio Gonzales, *Manifesto on Cuban Affairs Addressed to the People of the US* (New Orleans, La: Daily Delta, 1853). *A Series of Articles on the Cuban Question* (New York: La Verdad, 1849); *Cuestion negrera de la isla de Cuba por los editores y colaboradoes de La Verdad* (New York: La Verdad, August 1851). Lorenzo Allo, *Domestic Slavery in its relations with Wealth: An Oration Pronounced in the Cuban Democratic Athenaeum of New York* (New York: W.H. Tinson, 1855); José Antonio Saco, *Ideas sobre la incorporacion de Cuba en los Estados Unidos* (New York: 1856); Saco, *La supresion del tráfico de esclavos africanos en la isla de Cuba: examinada con*

of Spanish complicity in the trade through *La Crónica*, a newspaper it funded in New York, and banned unfriendly publications from entering Cuba. Behind the scenes, Spain also spent thousands of pesos on undercover spies to conduct what it called "direct and effective espionage" against exiled creoles and annexationists in the US.[46]

American expansionists and their creole allies often placed evidence of Spanish responsibility for the traffic alongside testimonies of American virtue. The comparison was stark: while degraded Spain continued to deal in African slaves, the US had taken early and stringent measures against the trade. Attendees at a meeting of Cuban annexationist in Columbus, Ohio, made the contrast in 1851, resolving that while Spain offered "consent" to the slave trade, the US was "the first of civilized governments to declare the slave trade Piracy." The following month, in an article entitled, "The slave trade in Cuba," the *New York Times* noted that "one of the earliest legislative acts, on the part of the US, was to abolish it and brand it as piracy." The *Times* went on to explain that, "we have established it as a permanent and ineffaceable regulation, that the foreign slave trade shall never exist in any part of the US." The *Times*' myopia was striking; within a few years, New York would be one of the great world centers for the trade.[47]

Newspapers underlined the distinction between the US and Spain by emphasizing the cruelty of the latter's crime. In contrast to the US, an apparently enlightened nation, which had recognized the inhumanity of the traffic, Spain held no care for the suffering African. After one

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relacion a su agricultura y a su seguridad (Paris: Impr. De Panckoucke, 1845). For an analysis of texts created by Cubans and Cuban Americans on expansion, see Rodrigo Lazo, *Writing to Cuba: Filibustering and Cuban Exiles in the US* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

[46] On Spanish funding for *La Crónica*, see Ultramar, 4643/8, AHN. For defenses of Spanish role in the traffic, see *La Crónica* in *Daily National Intelligencer*, July 9, 1853. On *La Crónica* as a "mouthpiece" for slave traders, see NYT, July 29, 1853. For spies, see Presidencia del consejo de ministros to capitán-general, July 10, 1852, Ultramar, 4637/25, AHN. For suppression of newspapers, see Ultramar, 4638/3 & /6, 4645/15 & /55, AHN.

[47] *Ohio Statesman*, Sept. 2, 1851. *NYT*, Oct. 8, 1851.

Cuban landing, the *New Orleans Delta* described hundreds of "poor, miserable, half-dead shadows of men, who had been torn from their homes in Africa, and induced into the Island by consent and to the great profit of the Captain General of Cuba." Describing how the traffic had international effects, the *Daily Ohio Statesman* noted the "crimes of [Spain's] people who desolate towns in Africa, and run thousands of negroes into Cuba." After the appointment of another captain general in 1860, the *Commercial Advertiser* in New York hoped he would finally put down the "monstrous and inhuman traffic."[48]

Although Spanish responsibility for the trade was widely acknowledged in the US, expansionists' emphasis on the luridness of the 'Spanish' slave trade to Cuba led antislavery activists to compare the traffic unfavorably with the domestic slave trade at home. Some writers could not stand the apparent hypocrisy of expansionists excoriating Cuba for the Atlantic slave trade when the domestic slave trade in the US was running at records levels. The New York *Tribune*, for example, wrote in 1852, "wherein is the slave trade from Africa to Cuba worse than that from Richmond to New Orleans … the more we seek to find such a difference, the more unreal and evanescent it appears." Yet these were not crippling critiques. In their defense, proslavery writers attempted to distinguish between the horrors of the slave trade from Africa and the supposedly benign nature of slavery in the US. By midcentury, arguments in defense of American slavery were well-honed and were easily repurposed. Building on the arguments of South Carolina Senator, James Henry Hammond, that slavery was a "positive good," pro-slavery expansionists minimized the scale and brutality of the domestic slave trade and noted that the slave population in the US was growing through natural increase while Cuba still relied on the slave trade to

[48] *New Orleans Delta*, Aug. 2, 1850. *Daily Ohio Statesman*, Apr. 26, 1853. *Commercial Advertiser*, Sept. 13, 1860.

replenish labor for the brutal canes fields. In a nutshell, the argument was that American slavery was superior to Cuban slavery and if the latter was more like the former, slaves and whites would benefit alike. In their view, incorporating the island into the Union would allow this vision to become a reality.[49]

Aside from the afflictions the slave trade cast upon Africans, American expansionists argued the 'Spanish' traffic to the island created security problems for the US. On the one hand, they argued that Britain's frustration with Spanish foot-dragging on the traffic could well lead it to take drastic action in Cuba. Their main fear was that Britain would force Spain to emancipate all its slaves and to replace the slave trade with a free emigration scheme from Africa to Cuba. Rumors of this so called "Africanization" scheme were rampant in the US press during 1853 and 1854 and caused a frantic State Department to demand answers from their consuls in Cuba. The prospect of Africanization was a worrisome prospect not only because it would diminish the economic prospects of acquiring Cuba, but also because it raised the specter of 'another Haiti' on America's doorstep and the restiveness of the American slaves that would surely follow. In addition to the Africanization scare, some Americans argued that the slave trade to Cuba was offering Britain a pretext to send its warships into the island's waters. These cruisers, they argued, were really designed to accost American merchantmen and curtail American power in the Caribbean rather than stop the traffic. When naval interceptions did occur, including a flurry in 1858, they caused serious diplomatic spats between the US and Britain. In combination, these twin concerns were potent. Understanding that the slave trade was intermingling dangerously with

[49] NY *Tribune* in *Pennsylvania Freeman* Apr. 1, 1852. Drew Gilpin Faust, *James Henry Hammond and the Old South: A Design for Mastery* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana University Press, 1982).

American independence, even the moderate antislavery *New York Times* supported acquiring Cuba at least partly on these grounds.[50]

According to American expansionists, the natural solution to ending the illegal slave trade and all its attendant problems was to remove the heinous power that was responsible for it. The *Daily Ohio Statesman* made the case explicitly in 1853: "If Spain cannot or will not put a stop to the baseness of her Viceroy, and the crimes of her people who desolate towns in Africa, and run thousands of negroes into Cuba, the Island ought to be wrested from her forthwith." A more benevolent power, the US, would then take control and put an immediate stop to the traffic. As the *New York Times* argued, if Cuba was "annexed to this Union, the slave trade upon her coasts must cease." Indeed, the *Times* claimed, "[t]he whole power of the government would at once be enlisted in active measures for its suppression." Glorying over the supposedly fearsome US laws against the trade, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* argued "few will engage in the slave trade while capital punishment is the penalty of the crime." The paper implored bold lawmakers to seize the moment: "[t]he statesman who should bring about the annexation of Cuba, would … enjoy the satisfaction of having at once and forever annihilated the Atlantic Slave Trade."[51] Cora Montgomery held similar views, writing in her book, "If the US receive [Cuba], humanity will at least rejoice over the suppression of the slave trade, and a mitigation of the horrors of the Spanish system of servitude."[52]

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[50] On Africanization, see Saco, *Ideas sobre la incorporacion*, 8-12; Karp, *This Vast Southern Empire*, 186-198; MacMaster, *The US*, 337-86; Murray, 232-9; Corwin, *Spain and the Abolition of Slavery*, 115-22; Horne, *Race to Revolution*, 82-99. On British-US clashes in the Gulf, see MacMaster, *The US*, 387-424; Marques, *The US*, 222-4; Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 221. For a broad perspective on this issue, see Harral E. Landry, "Slavery and the Slave Trade in Atlantic Diplomacy, 1850– 1861," *Journal of Southern History* 27, no. 2 (May 1961): 184-207. *NYT*, July 2, 1853. See also, *Times Picayune*, Feb. 18 & 23, 1853.
[51] *Daily Ohio Statesman*, Apr. 26, 1853; *NYT*, Oct. 8, 1851; *Plain Dealer,* Dec. 16, 1854.
[52] Cora Montgomery, *The Queen of Islands and the King of Rivers* (New York: Charles Wood, 1850), 22.

Leading policymakers made similar arguments. Slave trade suppression featured prominently among the various reasons James Buchanan, John Mason, and Pierre Soulé laid out for the immediate acquisition of Cuba in the Ostend Manifesto in 1854. According to the authors, "[t]hat infamous traffic remains an irresistible temptation and a source of immense profit to needy and avaricious officials, who, to attain their ends, scruple not to trample the most sacred principles under foot." Although they gave Spain some benefit of the doubt about their motives, they also raised the specter of an out-of-control colony. "The Spanish government, at home, may be well disposed," they noted, "but experience has proved that it cannot control these remote depositaries of its power." Their final argument was that Spain's inability to control the slave trade created security concerns that the US could not ignore: "We should … commit base treason against our posterity should we permit Cuba to be Africanized and become a second St. Domingo, with all its attendant horrors to the white race, and suffer the flames to extend to our own neighboring shores, seriously to endanger our actually to consume the fair fabric of our Union."[53]

When Buchanan became President in 1856, he used his new platform to expand these arguments. Buchanan's annual presidential messages to Congress – key opportunities for presidents to lay out foreign policy objectives – tackled the issue directly. By 1858, the US was deeply embedded in the slave trade, especially in New York, yet that did not prevent Buchanan declaring in his annual message of that year that Cuba "is the only spot in the civilized world where the African slave trade is tolerated." This traffic, he claimed, was replete with problems for the US. Referencing the recent diplomatic spat with the British in the Gulf of Mexico, he explained that "the late serious difficulties between the US and Great Britain respecting the right of search,

[53] From Franklin Pierce, "The Ostend Manifesto Conference, &c.," in *House Executive Documents*, 33rd Congress, 2nd Session, No.93 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1855), 127-32.

now so happily terminated, could never have arisen if Cuba had not afforded a market for slaves." Then, striking a paternalistic tone, he turned to the wounds that the 'Cuban' trade was afflicting upon Africa. "Whilst the demand for slaves continues in Cuba," he argued, "wars will be waged among the petty and barbarous chiefs in Africa for the purpose of seizing subjects to supply this trade." The only solution, according to Buchanan, was for Spain to finally sell Cuba to the US. When that was accomplished, he assured the American people, "the last relic of the African slave trade would instantly disappear."[54]

The anti-Spanish narrative offered by Buchanan and some sections of the press deflected attention from US participation in the trade during the 1850s. One clear example is the *New York Herald*'s reporting of the *Lady Suffolk*, one of the first examples of a voyage with deep US connections in the 1850s. This American-built vessel was bought in Baltimore on behalf of the Cuban slave trader Julián Zulueta, sent to New York to outfit, and then to Havana before departing for Mozambique. It subsequently returned to the *la ensenada de Cochinos* (Bay of Pigs) in May 1853 with over a thousand slaves and several American sailors manning the decks. Although the American connections were clear, especially when the voyage came to light in the US press, "Un Amigo," a writer in the *Herald*, cared only for the complicity of the Captain General. To "Un Amigo," Spanish law was nothing more than a "dead letter." Underscoring its position, when the *Herald* learned that the *Lady Suffolk* had again been sold to slave traders in Havana the following year, it argued not that the American government should prevent the sale of ships in Havana, but that Spain's obvious complicity in the trade justified the US seizing the island.[55]

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[54] Buchanan's Message, Dec. 6, 1858. For more on the Buchanan's interest in Cuba and the slave trade, see Ted Maris-Wolf, "'Of Blood and Treasure': Recaptive Africans the Politics of Slave Trade Suppression," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 4 (2014): 53-83.

[55] *Weekly Herald*, Dec. 11, 1852 & Aug. 7, 1853. See also, Asuntos politicos, Leg. 48, Exp. 20 & 24, Leg. 219, Exp 1, ANC. Thomas, *The Slave Trade*, 646-7. Voyage # 4166.

Senior policymakers followed the same pattern as the *Herald*. Buchanan notably failed to address American participation in the traffic in any of his presidential messages, even though he mentioned the slave trade in three of the four, and American connections were by then impossible to deny. Some writers, often of a Republican bent, pointed out the omissions on Buchanan's part. The *New York Times*, which by the late 1850s was acknowledging that both Spain and the US were at fault for the slave trade, excoriated Buchanan for pinning the blame entirely on the Iberian power in his 1860 speech. His "attempt to fasten the whole blame on Spain" it argued, "unpleasantly resembles hypocritical cant."[56] Buchanan's narrative was powerful, however, at least until 1860, when the Republicans secured the presidency. Until that point, the Democratic view of Cuba, and the slave trade, held sway in the Federal Government and with a majority in Congress.

The lasting effect of pinning the blame on Spain was the not the acquisition of Cuba, which Spain continued to resist with British aid, but on the slave trade itself. The ideology of blaming Spain encouraged Americans to downplay the role of the US in the trade and sucked energy from efforts to suppress it. The *New Hampshire Patriot and Gazette* made the case in 1858: "There is no use in keeping British and American cruisers on the African coast as long as faithless Spain keeps up a slave mart in the lovely Cuban isle." It was partly under this rationale that the Committee on Foreign Relations in the US Senate proposed a bill to openly break the Webster-Ashburton Treaty and withdraw American cruisers in 1854. The Senate did not pass the bill in the end, but it settled, effectively, for undersupplying the fleet throughout the 1850s. Meanwhile, the few congressional efforts aimed at seriously tackling the US trade, such as a bill introduced in the Senate by William Seward in 1859, were roundly defeated. Although not perfect, Seward's bill

[56] *NYT*, May 23, 1860.

had attempted to introduce equipment restrictions aboard vessels, expand the powers of police in US ports, and beef up the Africa Squadron. Certainly, merchants in cities such as New York had a part to play in opposing these restrictions, as Seward later acknowledge, but it was the Spain-blaming mantra, based on the undying pursuit of Cuba, that provided the underlying resistance to serious American suppression during the 1850s. It was only when Republicans such as Seward ascended to power in the late 1850s, that the suppression of US involvement in the slave trade would become a priority.[57]

American Antislavery and Rising Tensions over the Slave Trade

Like their Democratic opponents, the Republican Party's approach to the slave trade was shaped by the issue of slavery in the US, and more particularly, the issue of slavery expansion. The Party was established in 1854 largely from the rump of the Whig Party, which had been a major national force in US politics for a generation. Though many Whigs held reservations about slavery, as a whole, their Party had been wary of inflaming disputes over the issue, which were increasingly breaking down along sectional lines. Although this approach had alienated antislavery radicals, including Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison, who called for immediate abolition of slavery throughout the US, it had kept the Party together in a loose national coalition. By midcentury, however, the Whigs struggled to maintain unity in the face successive national crises over slavery, including the Fugitive Slave Law in 1850, which forced northerners to return escaped slaves to the South, the annexation of Texas, and agitation over Cuba. By the passage of Kansas-

[57] *Patriot and State Gazette*, May 5, 1858. *NYT*, June 21, July 17, 1854; Jan 14, 1859, Feb. 16, 1860, June 16, Aug 15, 1860.

Nebraska Act in 1854, which repealed the Missouri Compromise of 1820, forbidding slavery in Kansas, the Party was on the brink of collapse.[58]

Although the Kansas-Nebraska issue proved the last straw for the Whigs, it was the genesis of the Republican Party, which emerged from "anti-Nebraska" meetings held throughout much of the Great Lakes region during 1854. Composed of many ex-Whigs and smaller remnants of the Free Soil and Know-Nothing Parties, the Republicans steadfastly opposed the extension of slavery in the US. Founded chiefly on a commitment to free labor ideology, and receiving greatest support in the North and upper West, especially in rural communities and small towns, the Republicans were determined to keep slavery out of the territories. One of the leading Republican figures, Abraham Lincoln, set the tone for the Party at a speech at Peoria, Illinois in October 1854. Responding to the Kansas-Nebraska Act, Lincoln walked listeners through a litany of slavery extensions since the Louisiana Purchase, before declaring: "we know the opening of new countries to slavery, tends to the perpetuation of the institution, and so does KEEP men in slavery who otherwise would be free." "This result" Lincoln said, "we do not FEEL like favoring, and we are under no legal obligation to suppress our feelings in this respect."[59] As Lincoln made clear, the Party was no friend of slavery and would resist its extension. This strategy was different than that of Garrison and Douglass who sought the immediate destruction of slavery, but according to Lincoln's Republicans, the constriction of slavery would ultimately lead to its demise.

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[58] On the decline of the Whigs and the formation and ideology of the Republican Party, see Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). On the Liberty and Free Soil Parties, see Richard Sewell, *Ballots for Freedom: Anti-Slavery Politics in the US, 1837-1860* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1976); Corey M. Brooks, *Liberty Power: Antislavery Third Parties and the Transformation of American Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016).

[59] Nicolay. John, and Hay, John, eds. *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: The Century Co., 1894), vol. 1, 193.

To explain the successes of slavery expansionism over recent years, the Republicans drew generously on the concept of The Slave Power. This theory, first developed by the antislavery movement in the 1830s, argued that proslavery forces had taken over the federal government, were reinterpreting the Constitution as a proslavery document, and were determined to expand slavery at the expense of free labor.[60] This interpretation gained currency during the 1840s and by the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, the Slave Power was commonly invoked in Republican as well as abolitionist speeches. Senator William Seward, a leading Republican from New York, pumped the bellows in the buildup to the presidential election in 1856, which returned another Democrat, Buchanan, to the White House. In a speech titled, *The Overthrow of the Constitution - Dangers from the Slave Power*, Seward argued the Slave Power had hijacked the nation's founding document in the interests of slavery. After listing the various extensions of slavery into the territories, he suggested that Cuba was next.[61] The following year, the Supreme Court's Dred Scott decision, which among other things, ruled that the federal government had no right to prohibit slavery in the territories, seemed to imply the Slave Power had even infiltrated the highest Court of the land. These developments led the diarist George Templeton Strong to conclude: "our federal government exists chiefly for the sake of nigger-owners."[62]

Both Seward's Republican Party and the antislavery radicals interpreted US involvement in the slave trade through the lens of the Slave Power and slavery expansion.[63] Their arguments began with an acknowledgement that although Spain was in many ways culpable for the slave

[60] For an introduction to the Slave Power, see Foner, Free Soil, 73-102; Gienapp, William E. "The Republican Party and the Slave Power," in Robert H. Abzug and Stephen E. Maizlish, eds., *New Perspectives on Race and Slavery in America* (1986), 51–78.
[61] *New York Tribune*, Oct 3, 1856.
[62] Entry on Nov. 2, 1860, in Phillip Lopate ed., *Writing New York*, 219.
[63] For another take on the Republican view of the slave trade, particularly the connections to slave expansionism, see Marques, *The US*, 227-30, 234-5.

trade, the US also deserved a large portion of the blame. To that end, Republican papers, particularly in New York, emphasized American connections to the latest slavers landing in Cuba, as well as fascinating *exposés* of the slave trade in US ports. They also covered court proceedings against indicted slave traders in great detail. For these papers, there was no minimizing the US role in the trade. As Republican paper, *The New York Times*, reminded its readers in 1856 (even before the main flush of US slave trading began), "We have over and over again called public attention to the fact the Slave Trade, in spite of all the laws against it, is actively and constantly carried on from the ports of New York and Baltimore. No one familiar with the details of the shipping business in this City is ignorant of it. The recent revelations in our Courts of law place it beyond controversy."[64] The following year, the *Barre Gazette*, announcing the arrival of two more American slavers in Cuba stated, "though we have pronounced slavery piracy, we are in fact the most successful slave-dealers, not even excepting the Cubans."[65]

According to these papers, the federal government, under the guidance of the Slave Power and Democratic party, had simply abandoned the slave trade laws. The New York *Evening Post*, which kept a close eye on the trade, and allowed Emilio Sanchez to publish his *exposés*, repeatedly attacked Buchanan's administration. Arguing that the US was more to blame for the slave trade than Spain, the *Post* posited "but for the connivance of the federal government, it is almost certain that the African slave trade would have been entirely stopped years ago."[66] According to *The Times*, the message filtered down through the ranks to local functionaries. Although the "trade is condemned by our laws and by the public sentiment of the civilized world" it noted, "nothing is done by the officers of government to enforce the law or vindicate the honor and dignity of the

[64] *New York Times*, Aug. 19, 1856.
[65] *Barre Gazette*, Apr. 3, 1857.
[66] *Evening Post*, Apr. 14, 1860.

country."[67] It didn't help that Marshal Isaiah Rynders, the head officer in New York, was widely reported to be not only a Democrat, but an outspoken proponent of expanding slavery's borders into Cuba and central America.[68]

Democratic organs, especially in the South, but also in the North, vigorously rejected these critiques. Sticking to a familiar line, an editorial in *The New York Herald* argued that although the trade was certainly active in US ports, the "one thing" that was "certain" was that suppression could only be achieved by the annexation of Cuba.[69] Democratic papers also attempted to make political capital out of northern involvement in the trade, the supposed home of antislavery. In an 1854 article titled "Slavers in New York" the New Orleans *Times Picayune* noted that "[i]n the midst of the public clamor there against the slaveholding South, as criminal enslavers of the black man, the slave trade is carried on to a great extent now, from the ports of the North." Until they were prepared to deal with the traffic "under their own eyes", the *Times Picayune* argued, northerners should "cease to come abroad in order to find means for easing their consciences."[70] The *Herald* agreed: "the country resounds with philippics and tirades against the South from Northern orators, and a Northern press, for one negro who may have been whipped to death at the hands of a brutal taskmaster, [but] we have nothing to say against the heartless and fiendish men by whom this traffic is carried on, and who live in our very midst upon their ill-gotten gains."[71] These arguments were at once a defense of Democratic suppression efforts and an attack on their antislavery foes.

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[67] *New York Times*, Aug. 15, 1854
[68] *NYT*, Dec. 22, 1856; Howard, *American Slavers*, 167.
[69] *New York Herald*, Apr 1, 1857.
[70] *Times Picayune*, Nov. 19, 1854
[71] *New York Herald*, Apr 1, 1857.

Although Republicans could hardly deny that the trade was taking place mainly from northern ports, they countered that its emergence merely demonstrated the pervasive influence of the Slave Power. Republicans, who drew their support mainly from rural communities and small towns, had long been skeptical of the sympathies that Northern cities such as New York held for slavery and the South. In 1858 at the peak of slave trading activity in New York, the abolitionist Unitarian preacher, Reverend Theodore Parker, declared that the "four great commercial cities of the North" – New York, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, and Boston – vote as the "slave power" tells them.[72] "The Southernization of the North" as Parker termed it, apparently extended to the slave trade. One Republican newspaper underlined the point, using an *exposé* of the slave trade in New York to remind its readers that the city now "belongs as much to the South as to the North."[73] The *Barre Gazette* took up the theme, suggesting the lack of slave trade enforcement was "chargeable to the southern proclivities of our judicial tribunals and executive officers."[74] The influence of slavery interests seemed even to extend to religious denominations, which by midcentury were splintering over the slavery issue in the US. In 1860, the New York synod of the Episcopal Church failed to approve a resolution denouncing the slave trade at their general meeting, despite the passionate urgings from a few lonely delegates. The *Evening Post* reflected: "Even the Episcopal Church then, it appears, is quite prepared not merely to justify men stealers, but to add the weight of its authority to their hideous cause."[75]

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[72] *Liberator*, Feb. 26, 1858
[73] *Evening Post*, "The Growth of the Slave Trade," in Archibald to FO, Feb. 20, 1860.
[74] *Barre Gazette*, Jan. 9, 1857
[75] In *The American Church and the African Slave Trade: Mr. Jay's Speech in The New York Diocesan Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church on the 27th September, 1860, with a Note of the Proceedings had in that Council on the subject* (New York: Roe Lockwood & Sons, 1860), 8.

According to Republicans, the Democratic Party, under the direction of the Slave Power, was not only allowing the slave trade to flourish in the North, but was also using the issue to satisfy its ultimate goal of expanding slavery south and west. In Republican eyes, by blaming Spain for the trade, Democrats were brazenly using the traffic as an argument for taking Cuba into the Union. If they were successful in taking the island, they would surely have to close the slave trade to its shores and replace it with the domestic slave trade from the US. In other words, the slave trade between Africa and Cuba would merely be supplanted by a slave trade from Virginia and Cuba. A more radical interpretation was that after securing Cuba, a democratic administration would continue to permit imports of slaves from Africa in an attempt to prevent the steady erosion of slavery in the Upper South through the domestic trade. "In this way," the *Hartford Republican* argued, "the planters mean to avail themselves of the African slave trade, to strengthen and spread their 'Institution.'"[76] This same premise could also be applied to populating the West with slaves. With the retention of the trade to Cuba rendering the slave trade laws effectively repealed, southerners could reopen the traffic to their shores as well.

Events in the South during the 1850s seemed to suggest repealing the slave trade laws was not merely mischievous speculation. In 1853, South Carolinian, Leonidas Spratt, purchased a Charleston newspaper, the *Standard*, to advocate for reopening the slave trade. Spratt quickly became what Horace Greeley, the editor of the antislavery *New York Tribune*, dubbed the "philosopher" of the reopening movement.[77] Drawing on a common proslavery refrain, Spratt argued that slavery needed to expand in order to survive. His twist was that the Deep South should draw on slaves not from the Upper South, but from the "teeming thousands from the plains of

[76] In the *National Era*, Aug. 14, 1851.
[77] New York *Tribune*, Aug. 20, 1859

Africa."[78] To Spratt and other 'reopeners,' the argument held a number of benefits: for slavery itself, which could now expand freely westward, while not sacrificing support in the Upper South through slave depopulation; for whites who could access slaves at low prices and broaden the base of slaveholders; and for even for Africans, who would now enjoy the "blessing" of American slavery. Drawing on the prevailing criticisms of 'Northern' traffickers, Spratt argued there could be a place in this traffic for Yankee slave traders, who, he argued, would "bring them to us … as fast as we will be ready to receive them."[79]

Spratt's ideas were widely discussed in the South, but they attracted limited support. The reopening movement gained the favor of a few influential radical newspapers, including the *Charleston Mercury* and the *New Orleans Bee*. Some policymakers, such as James H. Adams, the governor of South Carolina, also backed the idea. During the next few years, the issue became the major topic of debate at annual regional commercial conventions, with the majority of delegates eventually endorsing the position. In the Louisiana legislature in 1858, the House passed a bill to reopen the slave trade, but it was narrowly defeated in the Senate. Most southerners, however, including South Carolina Senator J.J. Pettigrew, opposed reopening, largely because it promised to divide the South, a fear sustained by the cold reception for the idea received in Virginia and Maryland. Indeed, for many among the minority of southerners who did make the case for reopening, the ultimate goal was not to actually reopen the trade, but to foster secessionism. William Yancey of Alabama, for example, sought to use the issue as a wedge to precipitate a break from the Union. This angle was well understood by many southerners, including Roger Pryor, the

[78] *Speech upon the Foreign Slave Trade, before the Legislature of South Carolina, by L. W. Spratt, Esq., of Charleston* (Columbia: Steam Power Press, 1858), 6.
[79] *Charleston Standard*, Oct. 28, 1856. For more on Spratt, see John Harris, "An Argument in Proof," 63-89.

editor of the *Richmond South*, who rejected reopening and demanded of its advocates: "If you intend to dissolve the Union, say so, in manly and explicit language."[80]

Despite gaining limited traction in the South, the reopening movement had a considerable political impact in the North. Republicans argued that reopening was not an idle threat, but a genuine plan. The *National Era* noted "[f]rom indications in prominent Southern journals, it would seem to be taking on the form of a settled opinion among certain portions of our Southern brethren." Then, borrowing Spratt's language, it asked, "And why not? If it be right to hold human beings as property, can it be wrong to transfer or exchange them as property? If it be right and decent to ship human beings at Norfolk, send them to New Orleans, and sell them in its public market, can it be wrong and indecent to ship them from Dahomey, and sell them to the planters of Louisiana?"[81] The *Barre Gazette* similarly noted that "it is by no means strange that the friends of the repeal, encouraged by the success of their previous efforts to perpetuate the 'peculiar institution,' should advocate the measure with boldness, and with entire confidence in its ultimate success."[82]

To Republicans, the reopening agitation was not only an appalling violation of settled national policy, but a serious – perhaps the most serious – blow to its restrictionist strategy. Lincoln made the point in his first big slavery speech in 1854, in which he noted that slaveholders' arguments that they should ought to be able to carry slaves into new territories in the West could

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[80] In *National Era*, June 3, 1858. On the reopening movement, see Wish, Harvey. "The Revival of the African Slave Trade in the US, 1856-1860," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 27, no. 4 (March 1941): 569–8; Sinha, Manisha. *The Counterrevolution of Slavery: Politics and Ideology in Antebellum South Carolina* (Chapel Hill, UNC Press, 2000); Takaki, Ronald T. *A Pro-slavery Crusade; the Agitation to Reopen the African Slave Trade (N*ew York: Free Press, 1971); Johnson, Walter. *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery, Capitalism, and Imperialism in the Mississippi Valley* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2013); Du Bois, W.E.B. The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the US of America, 1638-1870 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1896), 168-175.
[81] *National Era*, July 20, 1854
[82] *Barre Gazette*, Mar. 12, 1858.

just as easily be used to justify reopening the slave trade from Africa.[83] Similarly, in Seward's famous 'Slave Power' speech in 1856, the New York Senator presented the "restoration of the African slave trade" as the culmination of westward expansion and the true aim of the dark forces at work in the federal government.[84] The Boston abolitionist paper, the *Liberator*, shared this view. Contending that "The Slave Power will consummate its diabolical purposes to the uttermost," it posited, "[t]he Northwest Territory, Nebraska, Mexico, Cuba, Hayti, the Sandwich Islands, and colonial possessions in the topics – the seize and subjugate these to its accursed reign, and ultimately to reestablish the foreign Slave Trade as a lawful commerce, are among its settled designs."[85] The *Albany Evening Journal* also tied the slave trade to expansion, arguing that to prevent the "slave oligarchy" from reopening the slave trade, "we must insist upon freedom for Kansas."[86]

These arguments took on much greater momentum when some southern radicals turned rhetoric into action. In 1858, a Georgia businessman Charles Lamar bought a yacht named the *Wanderer*. With help from others, but working largely outside the regular US slaving networks based in New York and New Orleans, Lamar organized the voyage and sent the vessel to West Central Africa for slaves. The *Wanderer* subsequently took on about 400 captives in the Congo River, escaped coastal patrols, and landed the survivors on the south Georgia coast, where they were transported inland and sold. US authorities eventually captured the *Wanderer*, which was condemned and auctioned, but the Africans were never located. Moreover, Lamar, who was charged with violating federal law, was acquitted by a Georgia jury. This verdict came soon after

[83] Nicolay. John, and Hay, John, eds. *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: The Century Co., 1894), vol. 1, 206.
[84] *New York Tribune*, Oct 3, 1856.
[85] *Liberator*, Feb. 24, 54
[86] *Albany Evening Journal*, May 5, 1856.

the trial of the crew of another slaver, the *Echo*, which had been intercepted by a US patrol off the coast of Cuba, and rerouted to Charleston, South Carolina. In this case, the crew, who were defended by none other than Leonidas Spratt, were also acquitted by a southern jury.[87]

The *Wanderer* and *Echo* cases received a fierce reaction in the antislavery press. Although the landings were isolated incidents, with only one other vessel, the *Clotilda*, bringing African captives to the US, in 1860, antislavery newspapers were convinced that these instances were just the tip of the iceberg.[88] Rumors abounded that the slave trade laws had effectively been repealed by southern courts and the trade reopened. In 1858, the *National Era* published an article titled: 'Startling Discourses – African Slave Trade reopened at the South,' which contained details of numerous supposed landings in the South.[89] Meanwhile, in New York, the State Anti-Slavery Convention turned attention away from the slave trade at its door to declare that the slave trade to the South was "virtually now reopened." All that remained, they argued, was the formal repeal of federal law.[90] In 1859, the Republican-leaning *Commercial Advertiser* in New York promised such a move was afoot. "Southern members" of Congress, it argued, "intend to make the repeal of that law the great issue at the coming Presidential election, and in all election of members of Congress."[91]

The Republicans were just as eager to bring the issue onto the national political stage. As Leonardo Marques has noted, both Lincoln and Seward warned of the likely repeal of the slave

[87] On the *Wanderer*, see Wells, Tom Henderson. *The Slave Ship Wanderer* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1967); Calonius, Eric. *The Wanderer: The Last American Slave Ship and the Conspiracy That Set Its Sails* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2006). On the *Echo*, see Harris, "An Argument."
[88] Diouf, Sylviane. *Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The Story of the Clotilda and the Last Enslaved African Brought to America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
[89] *National Era*, Mar. 11, 1858.
[90] *Liberator*, Jan 28, 1859.
[91] *Commercial Advertiser*, Jan 31, 1859.

trade laws in their famous 'house divided' and 'irrepressible conflict' speeches in 1858.[92] For both men, reopening was the culmination of the Democratic Party's slavery-extending schemes that had imperiled the Union. Meanwhile, Seward and his allies piled the pressure on Buchanan in Congress. In January 1859, Seward proposed a bill to amending the Act of 1819 in the US Senate. Amongst the bill's many provisions were the allocation of more cruisers for the African coast, larger bounties for African Squadron and US-based servicemen, as well as for civilian informants, a requirement that ships clearing American ports for the African coast be searched before departing, and the prohibition of US vessels sailing from foreign ports to Africa. According to Seward, $1 million would be required to enforce this Act, although ultimately the Democratic-controlled Senate rejected the bill.[93]

By the end of the 1850s, the slave trade issue had therefore reached a crescendo. The traffic from US ports – mainly in the North – had peaked, helping to deliver record levels of African captives to Cuban shores. New York, especially, had cemented its position as one of chief slave trading cities in the world. The involvement of these ports in the traffic was well known and passionately critiqued by Democrats and Republicans alike. Meanwhile, in the South, radical southerners not only assailed federal slave trade laws, but some openly defied them. Although most Democrats, North and South, distanced themselves from such schemes, Republicans argued the reopening movement reflected the prevailing view in the South, that the trade was actually effectively reopened already, and that this state of affairs would soon be sanctioned by law. The slave trade issue was therefore replete with meaning for both sides of the slavery debate and for the both sides of the sectional divide.

[92] Marques, *The US*, 233-4.
[93] *NYT*, Jan. 14, 1859.

Federal Efforts to Suppress the Slave Trade, 1859-1863

Facing increasing criticism from Republicans and with a view to the forthcoming presidential election in 1860, Buchanan revamped American suppression efforts in the late 1850s. He began modestly by distancing himself from proslavery extremists. In the fall of 1858, Buchanan secured a Congressional appropriation to send the *Echo* Africans, who had been intercepted by an American cruiser in the Gulf of Mexico, to Liberia, despite objections from several Democrats who baulked at the cost and cries from proslavery radicals who argued they should be retained in the South and sold as slaves. Buchanan vigorously defended his position a few months later in his presidential address to Congress.[94] The next year, Buchanan went a step further, using his annual address to openly denounce the reopening movement. Although maintaining that Cuba was ultimately responsible for the trade, he declared his support for existing slave trade laws in the US and reminded Congress that "the fathers of the Republic, in advance of all other nations, condemned the African slave trade." Positioning himself as a moderate and couching his argument in the paternalistic language familiar to defenders of slavery, he argued that reopening the trade would disturb the "sober, orderly, and quiet slaves" of the South, who would be exposed to the "wild, heathen, and ignorant barbarians" of Africa. To that end, Buchanan assured Congress, "All lawful means at my command have been employed, and shall continue to be employed, to execute the laws against the African slave trade."[95]

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[94] Harris, "An Argument," 70-73; Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic*, 188. For more on the *Echo* Africans, see Sharla M. Fett, *Recaptured Africans: Surviving Slave Ships, Detention, and Dislocation in the Final Years of the Slave Trade* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 42-69.

[95] James Buchanan: "Third Annual Message to Congress on the State of the Union," December 19, 1859. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. For more on Buchanan's assault on the slave trade, see Marques, *The US*, 231-242; Ted Maris-Wolf, "'Of Blood and Treasure,' 59-76; Davis, Robert Ralph Jr., "James Buchanan and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1858-1861, *Pennsylvania History*, 33, 4 (October, 1966): 451-459.

Although this statement certainly embellished Buchanan's record on suppression, his administration had begun taking genuine measures to curtail the trade. One small initial step was to send a secret agent, Benjamin F. Slocumb, into the South in 1859 to report the rumors of illicit slave disembarkations. During his two-month trip, Slocumb travelled from North Carolina to Texas, gathering intelligence on illicit landings from officials, newspaper editors, and local slave dealers. Finding little evidence to support the rumors, he argued with some accuracy that they were "wholly founded upon the movements of the Wanderer negroes, or else they were mere fabrications, manufactured and circulated for political effect, or to fill a column in a sensation newspaper."[96] Meanwhile, Buchanan's administration was taking serious steps to curb the very real US involvement in the slave trade to Cuba. In the summer of 1859, Buchanan's Secretary of the Navy, Isaac Toucey, doubled the African Squadron from four to eight vessels. All four additions were the oft-requested steamers. Toucey also moved the Squadron's base from the Cape Verde Islands to Luanda. Finally joining the British and Portuguese, the American fleet was now positioned a few hundred, rather than thousand, miles from the epicenter of the trade. Closer to home, Toucey bolstered the Home Squadron from five to thirteen vessels, including four steamers which he dispatched to the Gulf of Mexico. No longer largely absent or lonely "scarecrows," the US Navy suddenly became a much more effective force. Between 1859 and 1860, American cruisers captured 20 slavers, more than double the haul from 1851-1858. These slavers had been carrying around 5,000 captives, whom the Buchanan's administration now sent to Liberia, following the precedent laid down in the *Echo* case.[97]

[96] Slocumb in Davis, Robert Ralph, Jr. "Buchanian Espionage: A Report on Illegal Slave Trading in the South in 1859." *Journal of Southern History* 37, no. 2 (May 1971): 271-78.
[97] Canney, *Africa Squadron*, 201-6, 233-4. The authoritative source on Africans captured by American cruisers during this era is Sharla M. Fett, *Recaptured Africans*.

Although Buchanan's assault on the slave trade was a new departure in American suppression, it was still inadequate. Naval suppression had never been as successful, but 1859 and 1860 also marked years of highest US participation in the slave trade. In 1859, for example, more slavers fitted out in US ports than ever before, helping deliver more Africans to Cuban shores than any other year in its history. Meanwhile, in Cuba and Iberia, American consuls continued to rubberstamp the sale of slavers before they sailed for the African coast. At sea, the vast majority of slavers dodged American cruisers, in part because the Navy saw its priority as protecting American commerce rather than tackling the slave trade. Meanwhile, the much larger British fleet was still denied the right to detain and search American slavers. It was true that the slave trade to the South was defunct, bar an additional landing of 150 Africans from the slaver *Clotilda* in Alabama in 1860, but this success was less to do with Buchanan's suppression measures, than the paltry appetite for actually reopening the trade in the South.[98]

As the ineffectiveness of the Democratic assault on the trade became apparent, Republicans stepped up their attacks. The *New York Times*, which dismissed the new approach as mere "tricks and schemes of the Buchananite Cabinet" rather than genuine policy, pointed out how the measures did little to tackle the trade at home. In particular, they failed to lower the burden of proof for prosecutors, which the *Times* saw as a critical impediment to securing convictions.[99] In March 1860, Henry Wilson, a Republican Senator from Massachusetts, attempted to push beyond Buchanan's measures by introducing a bill, which among other provisions, provided for the construction of five steamships for the African coast and authorized the President to open negotiations with foreign powers to allow the right of search within two hundred miles of the

[98] On the *Clotilda*, see Diouf, *Dreams of Africa*.
[99] *NYT*, Aug 25, 1859.

African coast.[100] The latter provision was a stark departure from traditional American policy, but as Wilson's colleague, Seward, told the Senate: "We are a powerful nation, and it is simply a point of duty to apply our power to bring this evil to an end."[101] Underlining their commitment to suppression (and the Democrats' lack thereof), the Republican Party adopted the following platform for the 1860 presidential campaign: "We brand the recent reopening of the African slave trade, under the cover of our national flag, aided by perversions of judicial power, as a crime against humanity, and a burning shame to our country and age, and we call upon Congress to take prompt and efficient measures for the total and final suppression of that execrable traffic."[102]

Lincoln's subsequent victory in the presidential election of November 1860 would have important consequences for the slave trade, but the immediate impact was to raise national tensions over slavery to crisis levels. First for the first time, a president was promising an end to the expansion of slavery in the US, a policy that many southerners would not tolerate. Lincoln hardly shied away from the issue. During his inaugural speech in Washington he declared: "One section of our country believes slavery is right and ought to be extended, while the other believes it is wrong and ought not to be extended." Illustrating his point, the new president argued that if the South seceded, it would reopen the slave trade, while the North would refuse to return escaped slaves as required by the Fugitive Slave Act. He hoped to avoid war, he said, but reminded the South that it did not have the right to break up the Union.[103]

Shortly before Lincoln painted this stark picture, others had desperately tried to prevent secession. In December 1860, John Crittenden, a US senator from Kentucky attempted to forge a

[100] *NYT*, Mar 20, 1860
[101] *NYT*, June 16, 1860
[102] *Liberator*, June 25, 1860
[103] "Inaugural Address of the President of the US on the Fourth of March, 1861" Senate Executive Document no. 1, Special Session.

compromise in Congress. His rescue plan included six amendments to the Constitution and four Congressional resolutions all concerning slavery. Perhaps sensing that suppression now had mainstream support on both sides of the isle, Crittenden proposed in one resolution that the slave trade laws "ought to be made effectual, and ought to be thoroughly executed; and all further enactments necessary to those ends ought to be promptly made." There proved not to be enough common ground, however, and both the House and the Senate rejected Crittenden's plan. All other attempts to stave off secession failed, and in December, 1860, South Carolina became the first state to secede from the Union. Ten other states would follow, forming the Confederate States of America under the presidency of Jefferson Davis, and with Montgomery, Alabama, as their temporary capital. In April 1861, the Confederate Army fired shots at Union troops lodged in Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor and the Civil War began.[104]

The outbreak of War created a new context that encouraged both the Union and the Confederacy to take action against the slave trade. Although many leading lights of the secession movement had urged reopening the slave trade to the South, the Confederacy rejected the traffic outright. Early in 1861, the newly created Confederate Constitution expressly outlawed the "importation of negroes of the African race from any foreign country other than the slaveholding States or Territories of the US of America."[105] One reason for this policy was, as many southerners had previously pointed out, that the issue divided the South. Now that the Confederacy was at war, internal unity was especially critical. The Confederacy was also seeking to assure the British of its motives at a time of when it sought their support against the Union, or at least, diplomatic

[104] On the immediate buildup to and outbreak of war, including the Crittenden Compromise, see McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 234-75.
[105] Confederate States of America. *Constitution Of the Confederate States of America: Adopted by the Congress of the Confederated States, at the City of Montgomery, Ala., March 11th, 1861* (New Orleans: S.S. Callender Co., 1861).

recognition. Moreover, with the Confederacy at war and Union warships blockading southern ports, the chances of reviving the slave trade were slim.[106] The British did discuss internally how they might deal with Confederate vessels if they appeared on the coast, but in the end, none did.[107]

By contrast, some early signals from the Union did not appear to back up Republican rhetoric of previous years. As the Confederates were drawing up their Constitution in the spring of 1861, Lincoln was debating withdrawing cruisers from the African coast. Sensing his priorities lay at home, not overseas, Lincoln discussed the matter with his Navy Secretary, Gideon Welles, who assured the president that the vessels were "well adapted for service on our own coast."[108] Lincoln subsequently instructed Welles to recall the entire African Squadron, except one vessel, which was to remain for six months. The news was well received on the African coast, where according to Willie Leonard, a sailor aboard the *USS Constellation*, there was "nothing talked of now, but the North, and the South, War to the death, Abolitionism, and Secession."[109] After they returned to US waters, these men would end up fighting on both sides of the conflict, while the cruisers were redeployed against the Confederacy. Although this shift of resources came under special circumstances, it was a radical step in American slave trade policy; it was the first time in almost half century that the US had not had even a nominal presence on the African coast to fight the trade. The British, especially, harbored concerns about the impact of the American decision,

[106] Takaki, *A Proslavery Crusade*, 231-243.
[107] Palmerston to Russell, Sept 24, 1861, PRO 30/22/21, John Russell Papers, TNA. Secession also killed Southern dreams of slave expansion aboard. See Patrick J. Kelly, "The Cat's-Paw: Confederate Ambitions in Latin America" in Don H. Doyle ed., *American Civil Wars: The US, Latin America, Europe, and the Crisis of the 1860s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 59-81.
[108] Gideon Welles to Abraham Lincoln, March 20, 1861, Abraham Lincoln Papers, LofC.
[109] Leonard, June 29, 1861, in Gilliland ed., *USS Constellation*, 318.

and even considered removing some of its own cruisers from the Mediterranean to Africa to make up for the shortfall.[110]

Other steps taken by Lincoln's administration proved, however, that it was serious about suppression. In spring 1861, the withdrawal of the cruisers notwithstanding, Lincoln sent early signals that slave trade suppression was a priority. First, he reorganized the Interior Department to create the Office for the Suppression of the African Slave Trade, similar to the British Foreign Office's Slave Trade Department, albeit, with a purely domestic remit.[111] Second, Lincoln approved a bill designed to bolster the federal slave trade laws. Among its provisions, the Act of March 2, 1861, allocated $10,000 to suppression in US ports. This new "secret fund," which was small, but not inconsiderable given the imminent threat of War, was dispersed by Lincoln's new Secretary of the Interior, Caleb Smith, to the federal government's new district attorneys and marshals.[112] These appointees had been carefully selected and proved to be committed to suppression. During the next few years, officials in every slaving port still within the Union, from Maryland to Maine, would use the new secret funds, with the largest sums deployed in the traffic's major hub, New York.

Robert Murray, the new Marshal in New York was particularly committed to suppression and judicious in his use of these new funds. In contrast to his predecessors, such as Isaiah Rynders, whose work had been questionable at best, Murray was determined as he put it, to pursue "those iniquitous dealers in human flesh night and day."[113] His appointment was especially astute,

[110] Somerset to Russell, Sept 13, 1861, PRO30/22/24/44, Russell Papers, TNA.
[111] Howard, *American Slavers*, 258.
[112] Robert Murray to Geo. Whiting, Feb 1, 1862, Communications received from Robert Murray & Edward Bates to Sec. Usher, Jan 13, 1863, Communications Received from the Attorney General, Records of The Office of The Secretary of The Interior, Publication M-160, NARA.
[113] Murray to Whiting, Jan 10, 1862, Communications received from Robert Murray, M-160, NARA.

because, as former harbor master in New York, he was familiar with the waterfront and its merchants, ships, and sailors. Upon his appointment in the spring of 1861, Murray launched a vigorous campaign against the trade. Operating much like the British, he initiated a major surveillance campaign on slave traders, often co-opting local watermen, including tug boat captains, into his operations (though apparently not Emilio Sanchez, who was still working for the Foreign Office). Between the spring of 1861 and the spring of 1862, Murray spent several thousand dollars on 'watchers,' including four men who kept an eye on the docks in New York and Brooklyn on a regular basis.[114] He also sent deputies laden with cash to Portland and Baltimore to procure evidence for trials.[115] In perhaps his clearest message to local traffickers, in the summer of 1861, he hosted a meeting of marshals from a host of Union states in New York to discuss suppression tactics. During their visit, Murray led the marshals around the docks and took them to visit imprisoned slave traders in the Tombs jail.[116] Rattled by Murray's approach, the slave traders attempted to gain his favor, but apparently, he was above reproach. In early 1862 he told the Interior Department that "barely two months ago, the Slave dealers held a meeting, and, unanimously decided to abandon the idea of influencing me."[117] Meanwhile, Murray's efforts were met by high praise in the Republican press, as well as the London *Times*, which said he had done more to suppress the slave trade than both the US or British fleets during the past ten years.[118]

The energetic work of officials such as Murray and the new tone emanating from Washington set the stage for several important trials. None was more important than that of the

[114] Murray to Whiting, Nov. 8, 1861, Communications received from Robert Murray, M-160, NARA.
[115] Murray's Memo. on Expenses for Suppression, Apr 22, 1861 – May 30, 1862, Communications received from Robert Murray, M-160, NARA.
[116] *NYT*, Aug. 16 & 17, 1861.
[117] Murray to Whiting, Jan 10, 1862, Communications received from Robert Murray, M-160, NARA.
[118] See newspapers in Archibald to FO, Sept. 5, 1861, FO84/1138, TNA.

American slave ship captain, Nathaniel Gordon. A seasoned trafficker, Gordon had completed at least three voyages since 1850. In the summer of 1860, during the later days of Buchanan's administration, Gordon had been arrested by the US Navy aboard the *Erie* while exiting the Congo River. The vessel, which had travelled from the US to Cuba, and then to Africa, was captured with almost 900 captives aboard. After the interception, the African Squadron sent the Africans to Liberia and returned the *Erie* and Gordon to the US for adjudication and trial. Having been caught with slaves aboard, the *Erie* was unsurprisingly condemned and sold. Meanwhile, in July 1861, Gordon went on trial under the Act of 1820 in New York.[119]

Delafield Smith, a Republican Party member and the new District Attorney in the Southern District of New York, worked diligently and prudently to secure a conviction. Appreciating the high evidentiary threshold expected in these cases, he sent informants to Massachusetts to determine the ownership of the vessel, and to Maine, Gordon's home state, for testimony on his citizenship.[120] Smith's efforts proved to be insufficient on the first attempt, and Gordon was acquitted by the jury. Convinced, however, that he had "carried a majority" of the jury, Smith redoubled his efforts.[121] Casting the net wider, he gathered new information from as far as Havana and tracked down several key witnesses to testify in court. Smith then initiated a second trial, which began in the fall of 1861. Understanding that some among the jury might be wary of convicting anyone of a capital crime, he proceeded cautiously. As he later wrote to the Department of the Interior, he laid out his argument clearly, but dispensed with a second counsel to prevent the "idea of persecution" to the jury. He also tiptoed around the broader issue of slavery, which had

[119] For more on Gordon, see Soodalter, Ron. *Hanging Captain Gordon: The Life and Trial of an American Slave Trader* (New York: Atria, 2006).
[120] E. Delafield Smith to Sec. of Interior, Nov. 22, 1861, Communications rec. from E. Delafield Smith, M-160, NARA. For more on Smith and the Gordon case, see Howard, *American Slavers*, 200-2.
[121] Ibid.

many friends in New York, by laboring "to separate the case from all questions as to slavery or slavery extension in this country." The defense countered in familiar terms, that Gordon was not a US citizen, but this time, the argument did not prevail. After just thirty minutes of deliberations the jury delivered a guilty verdict.[122]

The jury's decision was the first conviction under the Act of 1820 since 1854 and a great victory for the suppressionist cause, but it remained to be seen what would happen next. Delafield Smith underscored the surprise of many, noting that after the trial "Persons crowded into my office, the following morning, and asked if it was really so."[123] While the Republican press cheered the news, which the *New York Times* believed was another chapter in the "Dying Struggles of the Slave Trade," it was unclear if Lincoln would grant Gordon a presidential pardon or allow the sentence to be carried out.[124] The few prisoners who had previously been convicted under the Act of 1820, including James Smith in 1854, had escaped with just a few years in prison or been pardoned completely.[125]

Gordon's fate subsequently became a matter of intense debate. Newspapers gave varying accounts about whether Lincoln would stay the execution or not, with the Democratic press maintaining that the punishment was harsh, and that he would demur.[126] Meanwhile, in the White House, Lincoln was inundated with advice. Rhoda White, the wife of a New York judge, wrote to the president arguing that Gordon had merely been involved in the slave trade "when many then in power upheld it, and engaged in it" and that the sentence really ought to be commuted to life in

[122] Smith to Sec. of Interior, Nov. 22, 1861.
[123] Smith to Sec. of Interior, Nov. 22, 1861.
[124] *NYT*, Nov. 11, 1861.
[125] Howard, *American Slavers*, 227.
[126] See newspapers in Archibald to FO, Sept. 5 & Nov. 11, 1861, FO84/1138, TNA.

prison.[127] Eleven thousand petitioners from New York, including lawyers, clergy, and state lawmakers, agreed that the punishment was too harsh.[128] Meanwhile, Delafield Smith published a newspaper article, which soon reached Lincoln's hands, arguing for execution.[129] Behind the scenes, Lincoln met with his new Secretary of State, Seward, to discuss the matter and took advice from his Attorney General, Edward Bates.[130] In the end, he decided to go through with the execution. After a short reprieve, Gordon was hanged in New York on February 21, 1862. He was the first slave trader to be executed under the Act of 1820.[131]

A few months after this stunning execution, the US entered into an international Treaty that was unprecedented in American history. In 1861, Seward, intimated to Lord Lyons, the British Minister in Washington, that the US would be prepared to be more flexible on the Right of Search than previous administrations. Although Seward was following up on his arguments in the Senate the previous year, his suggestion was also guided by the realpolitik. Like the Confederacy, the US was seeking British support for the War, an aim that had been jeopardized been by the Trent Affair in 1861, in which a Union warship had arraigned a British vessel carrying two Confederate diplomats *en route* to London. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Palmerston sought to press home the advantage. In September 1861, he suggested to his Foreign Minister, John Russell, that the "north" should "prove their abhorrence of slavery, by joining and helping us heartily in our operations against slave trade, by giving us facilities for putting it down when carried under US flag."[132] The subsequent negotiations between Lyons and Seward were the polar opposite of the caustic tone

[127] Rhoda E. White to Abraham Lincoln, February 17, 1862, Abraham Lincoln Papers, LofC.
[128] Ibid; Gilbert Dean to Abraham Lincoln, February 18, 1862, Abraham Lincoln Papers, LofC.
[129] Edward Bates to Abraham Lincoln, February 19, 1862, , Abraham Lincoln Papers, LofC.
[130] Ibid.
[131] See Archibald's report to FO, Feb. 24, 1862, FO84/1172.
[132] Palmerston to Russell, Sept 24, 1861, PRO 30/22/21, John Russell Papers, TNA.

during the Buchanan era. In contrast to Buchanan's Secretary of State, Lewis Cass, who had been hostile to the British and bitterly opposed to Right of Search, Seward was remarkably upbeat. Seward wrote to Lyons that "a very great change which had taken place in public opinion concerning the Slave Trade" and that Lincoln and his cabinet were "warmly in favor" of a Treaty.[133] When Lyons queried what he would make of British cruisers bringing an American slaver into New York harbor, Seward said he would "see it with pleasure."[134]

Although Seward presented too rosy a picture of American attitudes towards the British navy, with some careful maneuvering, he was able to guide a Right of Search agreement through the Senate. To clear the path, Seward requested that both nations publically agree that it had been the US that had first proposed a treaty, even though Britain had drawn up the initial draft. The reason, which Lyons relayed to the Foreign Office, was not that Congress was opposed to suppression, but that there were "many who retained the old jealousy of Great Britain on the subject of the Right of Search."[135] Presenting the accord as an American idea, would, apparently, sweeten the pill. The ruse worked, and in April 1862 the Senate unanimously ratified by the Lyons-Seward Treaty. According to its provisions, Britain was permitted to search American vessels within two hundred miles of the African coast and thirty leagues of Cuba, while the US would be responsible for enforcing the Treaty at home. The equipment clause, a long absent feature of American slave trade law, was a central component of the Treaty, with the essential items, including shackles, boilers, cooking apparatus all accounted for. Marking another radical departure, the US joined the Court of Mixed Commission system. The US even committed to establish a Mixed Court in New York, which would adjudicate vessels captured near Cuba.

[133] Lyons to Russell, Feb 11, Mar. 25, 1862, FO84/1171
[134] Lyons to Russell, Feb 11, FO84/1171
[135] Lyons to Russell, Feb 25, FO84/1171

Reflecting on this great change in American policy, Seward wrote to Lincoln calling the Treaty, "the most important act of your life and of mine."[136] Two years later, in 1864, Lincoln's administration would cap its suppression efforts by extraditing José Agustín Argüelles, a Spanish official caught up in the slave trade, to Cuba, finally closing a legal loophole that had protected foreign traffickers for over a decade.[137]

The suppression measures introduced by the federal government between the spring of 1861 and spring of 1862 had a decisive effect on US participation in the illegal slave trade. In the wake of Gordon's execution and the vigorous efforts of US officials, slave traders in New York and elsewhere considered their options. Indictments were flying for outfitters and intermediaries in several US ports, including Albert Horn in New York and Appleton Oaksmith in Boston. Some of these individuals escaped serious punishment, including Oaksmith, who escaped from custody, but these occurrences were now exceptional.[138] Gordon's execution, especially, had a profound effect on the traffickers. In the buildup to the execution, consul Archibald in New York reported that the slave traders "are so alarmed that it is surmised that those who are under bonds will prefer forfeiting their bail rather than stand their trials."[139] One of these was João Machado, one of the most important intermediaries since the early 1850s, who was twice arrested and eventually

[136] Seward to Lincoln, Washington, Apr. 24th 1862, Abraham Lincoln Papers, LofC. For more on the Treaty, see Milne, A. Taylor. "The Lyons-Seward Treaty of 1862," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 38, No. 3 (1933), 511–525.
[137] On the Argüelles affairs, see Dulce to Ministro de Ultramar, June 12, 1864, 4692/4, Ultramar, AHN & Marques, *The US*, 219-222.
[138] Howard, *American Slavers*, 189, 234. For more on Oaksmith, see TePaske, John Jay. "The Life of Appleton Oaksmith: Its Latin American Aspects" (MA Thesis, Duke University, 1953). On Horn's trial, see *New York Times*, Oct. 24, 29, 30, 1862.
[139] Archibald to FO, Dec. 3, 1861, FO84/1138

skipped bail and fled, likely, to Havana.[140] Other prominent figures, including João Abranches, Almeida, J. Lima Viana, and Antonio Ros, left the US for good.[141]

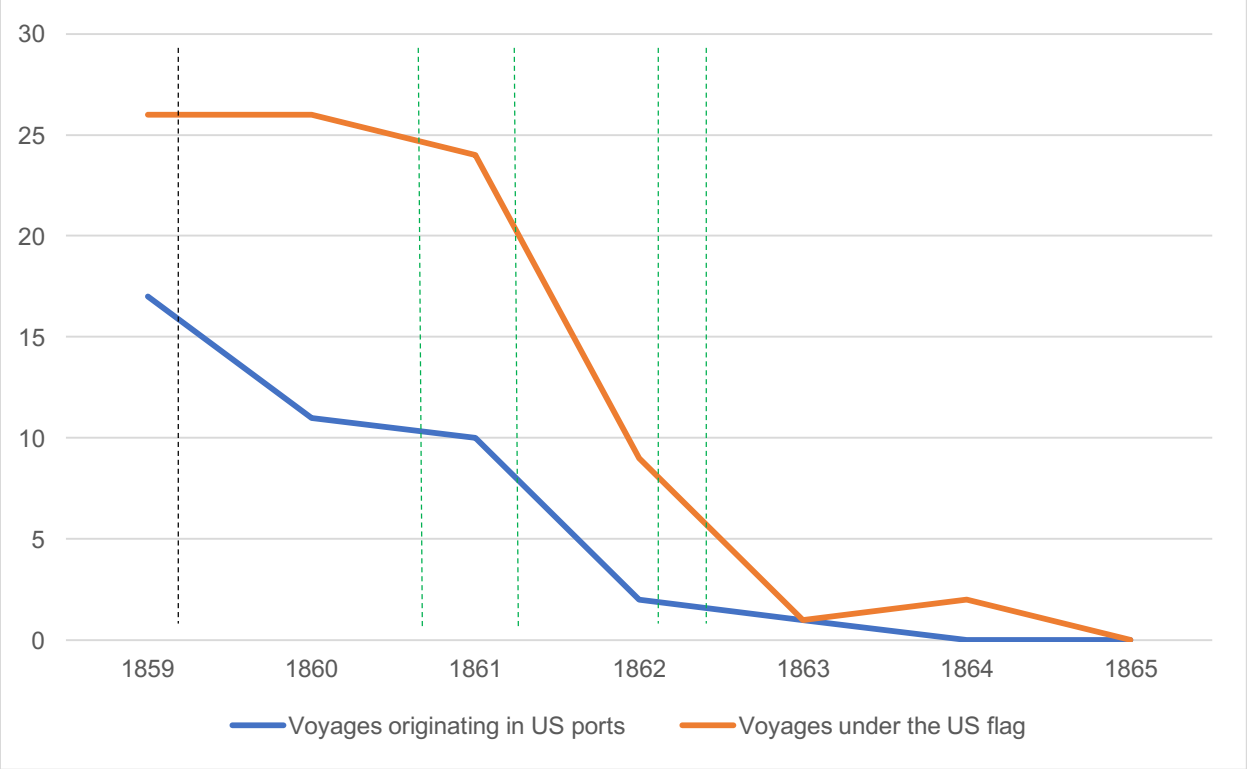
Some of these traffickers, including Mary Watson, attempted to reinvigorate the trade elsewhere. One of the few American women mentioned in British and US slave trade records, Watson was allegedly Machado's business partner and lover. Unlike Machado, Watson fled to Portugal and then to Spain, where she attempted to resume operations, perhaps hoping to link up with Machado on the Cuban end.[142] Robert Murray was aware of her departure and sent his operatives in pursuit. Murray worked with the US Consul in Cadiz and US Minister in Madrid, and prevented Watson from dispatching four vessels to the African coast.[143] Having now been shut down in the New York and in Spain, and with Lyons-Seward Treaty dissolving the usefulness of the American flag, Watson was out of options. Reports emerged from Spain that she had sought "solace in the cup" and died as a result.[144] The news was well received by Murray back in New York. By then, the slave traders had all fled his jurisdiction or melted back into other pursuits, although he had three indictments waiting for Watson in case she returned.[145]

Figure 5.2 charts the impact of growing US suppression efforts on American participation in the slave trade between 1859 and 1865. The blue and orange lines represent voyages departing US ports and vessels flying under the US flag, two of the main American connections to the traffic

[140] Sanchez to Archibald, Sept. 30, 1861, FO84/1138
[141] Sanchez to Archibald, Dec. 3, 1861, FO84/1138
[142] E. Delafield Smith to Caleb Smith, Apr 25, 1862, Communications rec from E. Delafield Smith, US Atty for So District of NY, Apr 12, 1861-Sept 26, 1867, Records of The Office of The Secretary of The Interior, Publication M-160, NARA; C. A. Munro to Seward, Dec. 16, 1861, Despatches from US consuls in Lisbon, 1791-1906, roll 7, 1861-1869, NARA, D.C.
[143] Murray's Memo. on Expenses for Suppression, Apr 22 61 – May 30 62, in Communications received from Robert Murray, Records of The Office of The Secretary of The Interior, Publication M-160, NARA
[144] Robert Murray to Geo. Whiting, Mar 29, 1862, Communications received from Robert Murray, Records of The Office of The Secretary of The Interior, Publication M-160, NARA
[145] ibid.

since 1850. The black dotted line roughly marks the moment when Buchanan's administration began to bolster US suppression in 1859. The green dotted lines mark Lincoln's election in 1860 and the three decisive moments in his administration's assault on the slave trade between 1861 and 1862; namely, his appointments of new slave trade agents in US ports, the execution of Gordon, and the Senate's ratification of the Lyons-Seward Treaty. As the graph shows, Buchanan's suppression efforts did little to arrest US participation in the traffic. By contrast, American involvement in the trade declined precipitously under Lincoln's presidency, especially as his new agents got to work in New York and other ports. After Gordon's execution and the ratification of the Treaty, US participation in the trade finally petered out.

Figure 5.2. *US participation in the slave trade by voyages departing US ports and voyages under the US flag, 1859-1865*



Source: slavevoyages.org

Conclusion

In the summer of 1862, Gabriel Tassara, the Spanish Minister in Washington DC, wrote to his superiors in Madrid about the great changes that were taking place in relation to the slave trade in the US. In contrast to missives from previous years, in which he reported streams of slaving vessels leaving US ports, this message concerned the recently-ratified Lyons Seward Treaty, which promised to squash these departures completely. After leading his superiors through the main features of the accord – a copy of which he enclosed – Tassara determined that the Right of Search concession was a "great innovation" and that the Treaty as a whole would likely heap pressure on Spain to ramp up its own suppression campaign. In an attempt to account for the important developments in the US, Tassara pointed to the change of government in Washington. In his view: "It is more than likely that had the democratic party continued in power this treaty would never have been celebrated. The republican party on the contrary doesn't do more than obey its principle when celebrating it."[146]

Tassara's analysis captured the essence of the situation. The suppression measures that had culminated in the Lyons Seward Treaty were indeed great innovations and were largely down to the change in administration. Throughout the 1850s, successive Democratic administrations had rejected granting Britain the Right of Search and generally failed to prioritize slave trade suppression at home and aboard. Although their approach was partly to do with long-standing opposition to British interference with American shipping, it was largely because Democrats had blamed Spain for the trade in order to bolster the case for acquiring the island and spreading American slavery. The Republican Party, by contrast, were committed to checking slavery in all

[146] Tassara Memo, May 1, 1862 in Ultramar, 4681/45, AHN.

its forms. For the Republicans, obeying their principles meant not only limiting the expansion of slavery to the places where it already existed, but extinguishing the slave trade, which promised to drive the institution into new territories. Their work began during the mid-1850s and helped force Buchanan to take some suppression measures in 1859. With their assent to power in 1860 and secession sweeping much Democratic opposition aside, Lincoln's administration was able to move decisively against US participation in the traffic.

Conclusion

Despite the twin losses of New York as a slave-trading haven and the valuable protection of the US flag, the traffic continued for another five years on a diminishing scale. During this period, Spain took a more prominent role in the logistics of the trade. The port of Cadiz became an especially important embarkation point for slavers. In 1862, New York exiles Antonio Augusto Botelho and José Lima Vianna were key players in dispatching slavers from Cadiz, although they were gradually supplanted by local merchants and shipowners such as Manuel Lloret.[1] By 1864, Lloret and his allies had made Cadiz, in the words of the British consul Alexander Dunlop, "the European center of the trade."[2] If Cadiz led the way, Barcelona and Bilbao were not far behind. Bilbao was particularly favored by the Basque native Julián Zulueta in Cuba. In 1863, one of Zulueta's vessels, the *Luiza*, sailed from Bilbao to the Bight of Benin for slaves. In a letter intercepted by the British, João Soares Pereira, a Portuguese trafficker in the Bight, informed Zulueta that a cargo of "oil" would be waiting for the *Luiza* when it arrived. The metaphor hardly needed careful deciphering.[3]

As Spanish ports took a greater role in dispatching vessels into the slave trade, their residents increased their financial stake in voyages. Although investors in Cadiz, Barcelona, and Bilbao had always had some opportunities to finance illegal slaving voyages thanks to their ties with Cuban traffickers and the occasional departures from Spanish ports, the growing importance of Spanish shipping after 1861 created additional opportunities. Wealthy merchants with close ties to Cuba were best positioned to invest. The Portillo family of Cadiz became some of the most

[1] John Macpherson Brackenbury to Lord Russell, Dec. 30, 1862, FO 84/1174, TNA.
[2] Alexander Dunlop to Russell, July 29 1864, FO 84/1218, TNA.
[3] João Soares Pereira to Julián Zulueta, Dec. 1, 1863, enc. in Admiralty to Russell, Jan. 7 1864, Admiralty 123/184, TNA.

prominent Spanish slave traders in the 1860s, owing, in part, to a business partner in Havana.[4] Iberian friends of Zulueta also stood to do well. In 1863, a telegram arrived in Bilbao from Cuba announcing the safe arrival of another of Zulueta's slavers, *Noc Daqui*. It had surely been sent by Zulueta to reassure nervous investors at home.[5]

As ties between slave traders based in Cuba and Spain grew stronger and the influence of US faded, the position of investors in West Central Africa also weakened. Now left to deal with the Cubans without their allies in New York, the most favorable arrangement they could forge was a normal 'freighting' deal coupled with a prayer that the Cubans would fairly remit the spoils. The 1863 voyages of the *Cicerón* and the *Haydee* are two examples of this approach, although in the latter case the British intercepted the vessel and no-one made money.[6] According to Joseph Crawford, the British consul in Havana, some West Central African investors were prepared to make even less favorable arrangements. In 1862, he informed the Foreign Office that "desperate" West Central African traffickers had appeared on the island, "offering slaves deliverable at certain points, so very cheap that they are hardly to be resisted."[7] This proposal, which entailed shouldering all the risks at sea as well as a heavy discount, was highly unfavorable and reflected the increasingly weak position of West Central African investors as the 1860s wore on.

The changing dynamics of voyage financing became irrelevant, however, as the Spanish authorities in Cuba began to take serious action against the trade during the mid-1860s. The origins of this shift were partly external. The Lyons-Seward Treaty in 1862 had isolated Spain as the final major international power still unwilling to take serious measures against the traffic. Spanish

[4] Dunlop to William H. Wylde, May 8 1865, FO 84/1241, TNA.
[5] Horace Young to Russell, Jan. 5, 1863, FO84/1203, TNA.
[6] For sources see Appendix, chapter 2.
[7] Joseph Crawford to Russell, 8 March 1862, FO84/1174, TNA.

officials in the Americas were certainly upset that the Treaty seemed to imply that Spain was solely at fault for the trade. Reporting on the Treaty to Madrid, Tassara in Washington complained that it was "height of brazenness [for the US] to make us responsible for a sin that at least was common to us." Yet Tassara also appreciated that as a result of the Treaty, the spotlight was now entirely on Spain. In the same letter to Madrid, he argued that "in the current state of things we must not allow ourselves to be overtaken by anyone in the repression of the trade."[8] Tassara's instincts appeared astute, especially as other powers began increasing pressure on the Spanish government after the Treaty. In 1863, Britain sent six cruisers to Cuban waters to patrol for slavers, the largest deployment since 1858, when tensions with Buchanan's administration had forced the British to withdraw from the Gulf of Mexico.[9] The following year, the US and Britain requested a joint anti-slave trade treaty with Spain. Madrid rejected the proposal, still concerned about foreign designs on Cuba, but the fact that even the US were now asking for a slave trade treaty marked how isolated the Iberian power had become.[10]

As external pressures mounted, a series of reformist captain generals in Cuba attempted to vigorously suppress the trade. Each of these governors – Francisco Serrano, Domingo Dulce, and Francisco Lersundi – were more committed to suppression than many their predecessors. Serrano, for example, requested on several occasions that Madrid declare the slave trade piracy, although his superiors rejected the proposal, fearing that such a move might anger Cuban planters.[11] A few

[8] Tassara Memo, May 1, 1862 in Ultramar, 4681/45, AHN.
[9] Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 308.
[10] Dulce to Ministro de Ultramar, June 12, 1864, Ultramar, 4692/4, AHN. For the impact of the Treaty and the Civil War on the slave trade to Cuba and Cuban slavery, see Matt D. Childs, "Cuba, the Atlantic Crisis of the 1860s, and the Road to Abolition," in Don H. Doyle ed., *American Civil Wars: The US, Latin America, Europe, and the Crisis of the 1860s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 204-21.
[11] Ibid; Serrano to Ministro, Sept. 6, 1861, Legajo 3549/3, Ultramar, AHN. For more on these captains general see, Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 309-313. Corwin, *Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba*, 145-9.

years later, Serrano's successor, Dulce, departed from protocol by expelling two Cuban traffickers, Francisco Durañona and Antonio Tuero, from the island. Dulce also ejected several recently-arrived Portuguese.[12] More broadly, these governors sought to convince Madrid that the trade's days were numbered and that the future security of slavery on the island would not be imperiled by suppressing the traffic. In the summer of 1861, only a few months after the US Civil War broke out, Serrano wrote to Madrid insisting that "[t]he indisputable principle is laid, that the trade is going to decline in the world and that sooner or later it will have to be extinguished." "It would be insanity," he added, "for slavery in Cuba, an institution almost indispensable today for the development and maintenance of its prosperity, to depend upon it."[13] Indeed, Serrano argued that given the international assault on the trade, continuing the traffic could endanger Cuban slavery itself. As he put it succinctly to his superiors in Madrid, "the only means of keeping the one is to finish with the other."[14] Putting a more positive spin on the situation, Serrano also argued that Cuba could become like US, Brazil, and Puerto Rico, where slavery had grown in strength even after slave importations had ceased.

As Spain's response to Serrano's piracy proposal suggested, however, full suppression of the trade to Cuba could only come with support from the Iberian Peninsula. By the mid 1860s the conservative approach to suppression that had characterized previous Spanish governments began to change as a wave of liberalism that swept Madrid. Colonial reform, including slave trade suppression, was an important element of this movement, and was championed by new publications such as *Revista Hispano-Americana* and by Cuban creoles who denounced the trade

[12] Memo, Ultramar, 4692/4, AHN. See also, Francisco Durañona, *Exposición que elevan a S.M. la Reina D. Francisco Durañona y D. Antonio Tuero espulsados de la isla de Cuba por orden arbitraria del Capitán General D. Domingo Dulce* (Madrid: D. Zacarias Soler, 1864).
[13] Francisco Serrano to Ministro de la Guerra y Ultramar, 25 July 1861, Legajo 3549/3, Ultramar, AHN.
[14] Ibid.

at home and in the metropole. Meanwhile, reformers created the Spanish Abolition Society, and the former governors, Serrano and Dulce, who had returned to Spain, campaigned for suppression in the upper house of the Cortes. The end of the US Civil War in 1865 and the demise of slavery in the American South multiplied and galvanized the critics. When a liberal government headed by General O'Donnell returned to power during the same year, serious action against the traffic was all but assured. In 1866, O'Donnell's government introduced a strong new slave trade bill, which among other measures, broadened the definition of trafficking to include direct and indirect support for voyages, increased penalties for offenders, and negated Article 9 of the Penal Law, which had prevented the Cuban authorities from searching estates for newly arrived slaves.[15] The Spanish Senate passed the bill the following year. It was fully implemented in Cuba by Captain General Joaquín Manzano, who demonstrated his desire to end the traffic by making an additional proclamation in Havana, which contained even sterner regulations and punishments.[16]

The end of US participation in the slave trade, Spain's growing international isolation, and the stronger efforts of the Spanish government to suppress the traffic were reflected in the demise of the slave trade in the 1860s. In contrast to the Brazilian case in 1850, when a massive trade was suddenly cut off by a dramatic death blow, the decline in the trade to Cuba was gradual and the result of several wounds, none individually mortal, but collectively fatal. In 1861, when Lincoln's administration first began to take serious action against the trade, around 24,000 captives boarded slave ships on African shores. That number roughed halved every year until the closure of the trade

[15] *Disposiciones sobre la represion y castigo del tráfico negrero* (Habana: Imprent del Gobierno y Capitanía general, por S.M., 1867)

[16] June 7, 1867, *Gaceta de la Habana*. For the colonial authorities' energetic measures to suppress the trade in Cuba in 1866, see Gobierno general, Legajo 439/21263 & /21266. On the shifts in Spain and its colonial policy see Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 316-24; Schmidt-Nowara, *Empire and Antislavery*, 100-25 & "From Aggression to Crisis: The Spanish Empire in the 1860s" in Doyle, *American Civil Wars*, 125-146; Corwin, *Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba*, 152-88.

in 1867.[17] Although it emerged from various sources, government action in the US, Spain, and Britain, gradually took its toll on the trade. Despite the fact that world sugar and Cuban slave prices remained high, action by these states effectively raised the risk of voyages to the point where traffickers were unprepared to send their ships to sea.[18] According to Manzano, one final slaver arrived in Cuba in the summer of 1867, but there were no reliable reports of further disembarkations.[19]

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The suppression of the slave trade to Cuba signaled that the final phase of the transatlantic slave trade was over. The midcentury traffic had always been in some ways fragile. After several generations of sustained assault by a growing cast of assailants, the traffic had few open defenders. The collapse of the traffic to Brazil in 1850 had been a particularly significant blow for global antislavery. As the international web of suppression stretched wider, the traffic became confined to three main zones: the US, West Central Africa, and Cuba. Yet even here it was not totally secure. The US, Spanish, and Portuguese made some effort to suppress the trade, while the British, having precipitated the closure of the Brazilian trade, drove especially hard to finally extinguish the traffic altogether. Slave traders and sugar barons in Cuba were well aware that the slave trade might not last much longer. For this reason, many Cuba-based traffickers, including the infamous Portuguese

[17] 'Voyages' http://slavevoyages.org/estimates/iYqQPDao
[18] Bergad, Iglesias García, and Carmen Barcia, *The Cuban Slave Market*, 48-50. For Cuban planters' positions on these changes during the 1860s, see María del Carmen Barcia, *Burguesía esclavista y abolición* (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1987).
[19] María de los Ángeles and Aisnara Perera Díaz, *Contrabando de bozales*, 241-4; Murray, *Odious Commerce*, 324-5.

slave trader Cunha Reis, who had operated in the island from 1858, promoted 'free' emigration schemes from Africa, while others became involved in the nascent 'coolie' trade from China.[20]

Despite this pressure, the traffic survived, and at times thrived, for much of the midcentury period. Planter demand for slave labor in Cuba was strong, while Spain, wary of planters' political loyalties and shielded from British pressure by the US, failed to vigorously and consistently prosecute the traffic. On the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, several African societies remained strongly attached to the trade and saw limited demand for alternative exports. The British themselves aided the traffic indirectly by selling slave trading goods on the African coast and by importing vast amounts of Cuban sugar. The British government acknowledged this problem internally, but never resolved it. Meanwhile, slave traders proved remarkably adept at adjusting to the new scenarios. Under increased international pressure, they migrated to locations where suppression was weaker and forged new transatlantic alliances. By the close of the traffic in 1867, they had brought over a quarter of a million captives aboard their vessels since 1850.

As midcentury traffickers and their opponents fought one another, they turned their battleground into a strikingly modern arena. Although the traffic was more geographically constricted than before, it had probably never been as internationalized. Unlike the fairly discrete North and South Atlantic trades of before, the traffic now crossed even more jurisdictional, legal, and linguistic boundaries. Slave traders themselves were a particularly multiethnic and transient group, largely because of the new international networks at play and because suppression forced them to be on the move. Regular shipping patterns and faster vessels also allowed them to travel

[20] Suarez Ardugin, Cunha Reis y Perdones, *Proyecto de Immigracin Africana presentado al superior gobierno de esta isla* (Havana: Imprenta de la Habanera, 1860). For more on Cunha Reis in Cuba, see Expediente de solicitud de Manuel Basilio Reis', June 19, 1861, Ult., 4676/64, AHN; *Diario de la Marina*, 3 May 1861.

more quickly. Indeed, although their work was just as brutal as before, in many ways it was more technically advanced. Slave traders used larger, faster vessels, often built in the US, and harnessed new technologies such as the telegram. In Cuba, traffickers occasionally transported slaves inland from the coast using railroads and found new ways of laundering and transferring capital, including through Cuba's first bank, *Banco Español*. Antislavery forces responded with modern weapons of their own. The British created a vast intelligence network stretching from the Americas, via Europe, to Africa, using steamers and railways, not to mention a growing network of spies and consuls who were now spread throughout the Atlantic world thanks to growing global trade. On a smaller scale, Manzano and his regional lieutenants began communicating across Cuba by telegram during the final crackdown on the trade in the mid 1860s.[21] During the final phase of the slave trade, therefore, both the traffic and its suppression bore the hallmarks of the modern world.

The US proved to be a critical player in both the slave trade and its eventual suppression. The US's growing commercial and diplomatic strength were particularly important in sustaining the trade. American shipbuilders produced fast vessels – ideal for illegal slaving – and US ports contained merchants who already operated in the long-distance trade to slaving zones and proved to be useful allies to traffickers. The huge shipping and financial center of New York was an especially attractive hub for slave traders thanks to its large international trade, many overseas merchants, and abundance of dockworkers and seamen. The US government's ability to resist British diplomatic pressure to give up the Right of Search made the US flag particularly appealing. Despite the fact that Britain had compelled all other major slaving nations to concede the Right of Search, and that the trade was now almost completely conducted under the US flag, Washington

[21] See Gobierno general, Leg. 439/21266-9, ANC.

refused to yield to British demands. The British did occasionally violate American sovereignty by intercepting vessels flying US colors, but strong reactions in the US limited these interventions. British frustration with this situation was manifested in their hiring of Sanchez, who they believed could provide sufficient evidence of US ownership to sustain their captures and mollify the American government.

The politics of slavery and the slave trade in the US would have an even a greater impact on the traffic and its suppression. During the early and mid-nineteenth century, the US expanded territorially into many parts of North America, often introducing African American slavery along the way. By the late 1840s, Cuba was a major target of many expansionists, especially among those with ties to slavery. Many Americans, including leading policymakers in the ruling Democratic Party, supported this position. These individuals did not have a vested interest in the slave trade except to use it as a tool to delegitimize Spanish rule in Cuba. By the time the dozen or so migrant traffickers from the South Atlantic trade arrived in New York in the early and mid 1850s, many newspaper editors and senior policymakers were already committed to blaming Spain for the traffic to Cuba. The effect of this argument, which held sway in the White House and in Congress for much of the 1850s, was to neglect suppression at home even as it grew to extraordinary levels later in the decade.

The emergent Republican Party, however, viewed the slave trade very differently. Favoring free labor and free soil over slavery expansion, the Republicans considered the rising role of the US in the slave trade as further evidence of the Slave Power's hold over the federal government and slavery's seemingly inexorably spread throughout the nation. Radical southerners' suggestion that the Abolition Act ought to be repealed and the arrival of a few hundred Africans on US soil made these dangers tangible. The Republicans, including Abraham Lincoln and William Seward,

would make these arguments central to their national antislavery platform in the late 1850s, which in turn stoked sectional tensions between North and South. When they entered power and the Civil War erupted, the Republican leadership moved swiftly to concede the Right of Search to the British and to oust the slavers from New York and other US ports.

The effect of the US departure from the trade was considerable. With US ports no longer active in the trade and with no protection from the American flag, traffickers in Europe, Africa, and Cuba struggled keep the traffic going. Meanwhile, in the diplomatic sphere, the US Treaty with Britain further highlighted Spain's growing isolation. The course of the Civil War also suggested that slavery itself might be imperiled in Spain did not finally suppress the trade. These factors, in alliance with a new approach to the traffic by Cuban governors and growing liberalism in Spain, resulted in vigorous attempts to suppress the traffic in Cuba and reluctance by slave traders to conduct further voyages. The US, therefore, was in many ways the linchpin in the triangular nexus sustaining the traffic, despite the fact that only a few hundred African slaves arrived on its shores. Although slavery would survive in Cuba and in Brazil until the 1880s, the US withdrawal from the trade had played a major part in finally ending the slave trade to the Americas.

Appendix

Table 2.4: *Voyage investment data, 1851-1866.*

These are voyages for which investment data is available in British and US state archives, personal papers, newspapers, and secondary works.

Name	**Voyage # in 'Voyages'**	**Year of Voyage**	**Source**
Cobra	4453	1852	ADM 123/177, TNA
Providencia	-	1852	ADM 123/177, TNA
Restaurador	4155	1853	John Beecroft to Lord Clarendon, Feb. 20, 1854, FO84/950, TNA.
Unnamed brig	-	1854	*New York Times*, June 25, 1856
Dolores	-	1855	John Morgan to Lord Clarendon, Mar. 8, 1856, FO84/995, TNA.
Braman	-	1856	*New York Times*, June 25, 1856; *New York Tribune* Oct. 10, 1856.
Pierre Soulé	4209	1856	John O'Sullivan to Lewis Cass, Mar. 28, 1857, SDR, NARA.
Mary E. Smith	4968	1856	John Morgan to Clarendon, Aug. 11, 1856 & W. Stafford Jerningham to Lord Clarendon, June 13, 1856, FO84/995, TNA.

Haidee	4285	1858	Edward Archibald to Lord Malmesbury, Mar. 8, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA.
Tacony	5125	1859	Edward Archibald to Lord Malmesbury, May 17, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA.
William H Stewart	-	1859	Edward Archibald to Lord Malmesbury, May 28, 1859, FO84/1086, TNA.
Clotilda	36990	1860	Diouf, *Dreams of Africa in Alabama*, 55-9
Cicerón	4988	1863	John V. Crawford to Lord Russell, Dec. 12, 1863, FO84/1197, TNA.
Haydee	4830	1863	Commodore Wilmot to Rear-Admiral Sir B. Walker, Dec. 31, 1863 in W. G. Romaine to E. Hammond, Apr. 29, 1864, FO84/1228, TNA.
Unnamed vessel		1865	WYL/28/29-31, W. Vredenburg to W. Wylde, Aug. 25, 1865, WFP, DUA.

Table 2.6: *"Cargo" Account of the* Pierre Soulé*, 1856*

This accounting document, found by the Portuguese authorities during a house raid in Angola, shows the division of the 'freights' in the voyage of the *Pierre Soulé*. The first column lists the names of the thirty-five 'cargo' owners. Among those who are traceable, almost all were natives of Portugal living in the embarkation zone in southern Angola. The second column reports the number of captives each 'cargo' owner sent aboard the vessel. The third column shows that each investor was remitted US$79.3275 for each captive that arrived alive. At the bottom of the document we see that investors were not owed returns for captives in their 'lot' who had died before landfall in Cuba. The final column shows the total amount that each investor was to receive in remittances. Figures were given to four decimal places in the original table, but have been rounded to two here for the totals column; as a result, the grand total is very slightly different from the sum of the totals for each investor. Note: this was not an especially lucrative voyage for the 'cargo' investors, since the Cuban buyers refused to pay the pre-arranged fee.

Names	"Packages"	Prices (US$)	Total (US$)
J. P. da Cunha and J. P. Xavier	94	79.3275	7,456.79
Antonio de Carvalho Guimaraês	2	79.3275	158.66
L. A. de Sousa Monteiro	16	79.3275	1,269.24
B. Pacheco dos Santos (6 lost)	44	79.3275	3,490.41
João Soares & M Lino Ferreira (2 lost)	46	79.3275	3,649.07
D. Maria Boyd	1	79.3275	79.33
Maria Ferreira	6	79.3275	475.97
Manuel de Paula Barbosa	12	79.3275	951.93
Society of the Three (2 lost)	66	79.3275	5,235.62
M. Ferreira Torres	5	79.3275	396.64
Ant. Martin de Castro & D. Anna	16	79.3275	1,269.24
Francisco José da Silva Moraes	11	79.3275	872.60
Manuel A Maurity	2	79.3275	158.66
JP de Carvalho Braga	29	79.3275	2,300.50
Soares e Sousa	6	79.3275	475.97
Francisco Tavares e Silva	7	79.3275	555.29

João M. de Moura	4	79.3275	317.31
R.N. de Carvalhos Sequeira	1	79.3275	79.33
Antonio de Almeida	2	79.3275	158.66
José Lopez da Silva	10	79.3275	793.28
Manuel da Costa Sousa	17	79.3275	1,348.57
José Alexandre	2	79.3275	158.66
B H Pinheira & Rezo (2 lost)	29	79.3275	2,300.50
D Isabel & Correa Evangelista	13	79.3275	1,031.26
J. A. da Silva	6	79.3275	475.97
M. A. S. Moranha	8	79.3275	634.62
J. H. Fernandez	10	79.3275	793.28
J. Lucas	2	79.3275	158.66
Total of the packages arrived:	467		37,045.94
Lost			
of B. P. dos Santos	6		
of Society of the Three	2		
of João Soares & M. L. Ferreira	2		
of Pinheiro & Rezo	2		
	12		
Total of the Cargo	479		

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"Circuits of Wealth, Circuits of Sorrow: Financing the Illegal Transatlantic Slave Trade to Cuba, 1850-1867," *Anti-Slavery Republics: The Politics of Abolition in the Spanish Atlantic*, *Gilder Lehrman Center Annual Conference*, New Haven, CT, October 2015

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"Final surrender: Confederate Exiles at Tuxpan, Mexico," *Carolina Lowcountry and Atlantic World Annual Conference*, Charleston, S.C., March 2011

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